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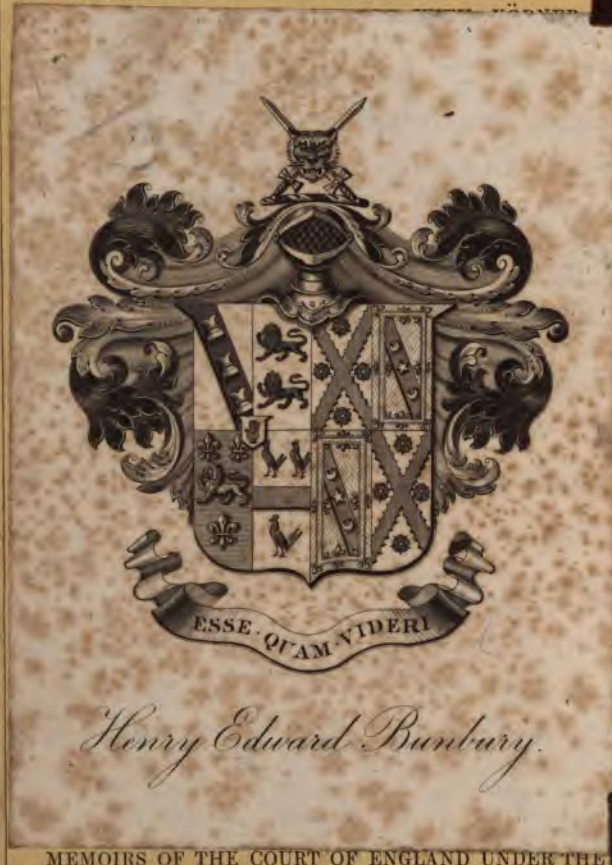

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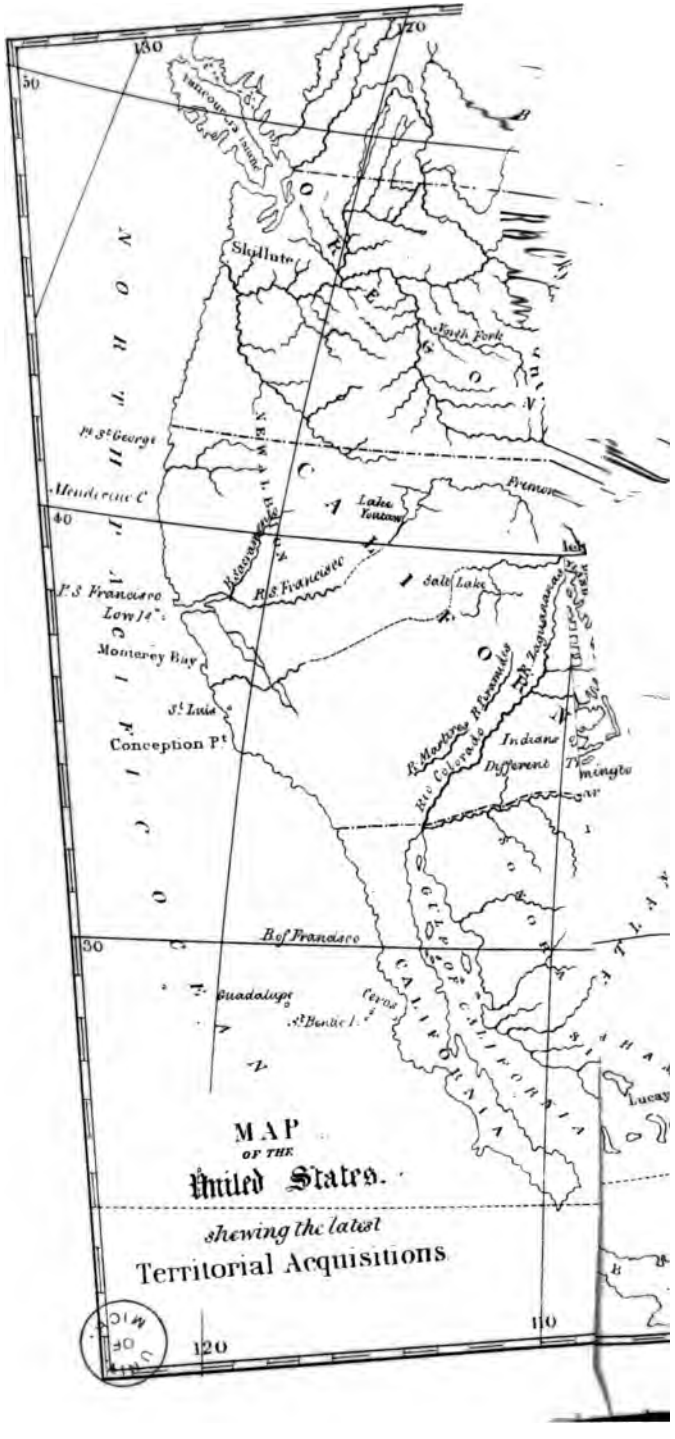
MAP
OF THE
United States.
shewing the latest
Territorial Acquisitions
Skillute
North Fork
Pt St George
Mendocino C
Lake Youtaw
Fremont
Salt Lake
R. S. Francisco
Pt S Francisco
Low 14m
Monterey Bay
St Luis
Conception Pt
R. Zaguananas
R. Fernandes
R. Martires
Rio Colorado
Indians
Different
B of Francisco
Guadalupe
Ceros
St Bentic I.
Lucay
NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN
CALIFORNIA
GULF OF CALIFORNIA
130
120
110
50
40
30

THE

WESTERN WORLD;

OR,

TRAVELS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1846-47:

EXHIBITING THEM IN THEIR LATEST DEVELOPMENT SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND INDUSTRIAL;

INCLUDING A CHAPTER ON

CALIFORNIA.

WITH A NEW MAP OF THE UNITED STATES,
SHOWING THEIR RECENT TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS, AND
A MAP OF CALIFORNIA.

BY ALEX. MACKAY, ESQ.
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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
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1849.

TO

RICHARD COBDEN, ESQ. M.P.

This Work

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Regent L.L. Hubbard
Gift
1-17-27
3 v.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is now some time since a work has appeared professing to give to the English public a general account of the social, political and material condition of the United States. At the same time, so rapid is their development, and so great are the changes which, in every national point of view, they are constantly exhibiting, that the progress made by them each year would almost furnish sufficient material for a new work respecting them.

That which I now venture to offer to the reader is not, as too many such works have been, the result of a hurried visit to the American republic. Most of those who have written upon America have done so after a few months' sojourn in the country; but there is no country in the world less likely to be properly understood on so brief an acquaintance with it. Where populations are dense, and confined within limited areas, national life may be soon studied and appreciated. But when a country is almost conti-

nental in its dimensions, and its inhabitants are yet comparatively few, and in most cases separated widely from each other, it takes a much longer time, if not to understand national polity, at least to gain a thorough insight into national habits, pursuits, and peculiarities; in short, into everything which enters into the social life of a people. By travelling a man may thoroughly acquaint himself with the physical aspect of a country; but he must do more than travel over its surface to understand it aright, in that which constitutes its most interesting, its moral, aspect. A people, before they can be fairly portrayed, must be studied, not simply looked at. It is impossible thoroughly to study the Americans during a six months' tour in America. A man who professes to have traversed the Union in that time, must have been almost constantly on the highway, the railway, or the steamer. He has thus been brought in contact with American life but in one of its phases, and for reasons mentioned in the body of the work, is incompetent to form a correct judgment of society in America, in its proper acceptation. Besides, he is constantly viewing it from its least favourable side, a consideration which accounts for the many erroneous delineations of it which have, in some cases unwittingly, been palmed off upon the English public as correct moral portraits of our republican kindred. To comprehend the social life of America, the working of its political institutions, and the bear-

ing of its polity upon its moral development, it is absolutely essential that a man should step aside from the hotel, the railway and the steamer, and live *with* the people, instead of living, as the mere traveller does, *beside* them. This I have done; having spent some years in the country before the journey described in the work was undertaken. During that period I had every opportunity of studying the American character in all its national, and most of its individual manifestations; of acquainting myself with the different phases of society, and with the manners and the domestic habits of the people; and of observing the working of their complicated political machine, from the administration of federal affairs, to the supervision of those of a township—from the election of a President to that of a Pound-keeper. My opportunities of observation I owe almost entirely to the courtesy and unreserve with which I was everywhere received and treated. Whether I have improved them or not the reader must judge for himself. The journey upon which the whole work is made to turn, was commenced in 1846, when I visited America for the second time, residing for several months at Washington, during a very critical period in our international affairs, and enjoying throughout the honour and advantage of a familiar intercourse with most of the chiefs of both Houses of Congress, and with many intimately connected with the executive government. So far as the work touches upon the

political development and the material progress of the country, it deals with its subjects down to the latest period; whilst much of that part of it which treats of the social life of the Union, is the result of former observation, confirmed by subsequent inspection. I trust that this will suffice to show that I have had ample opportunity of studying the people whom I endeavour to delineate, and of observing the country which I attempt to describe. If I fail of doing either, it will not be from the want of materials, but from inability to turn them to account.

The great object of the work is more to instruct than to amuse. But as the press is now so prolific in matter claiming the reader's attention, it is essential—especially in the case of one hitherto but little known in the walks of literature—that he should endeavour to amuse in order to instruct. They are but few from whom the public will now accept that which is merely didactic. The judgment must now-a-days be reached, more or less, through the imagination. It is on this account that although my main object is to present the reader with a faithful account of the political system, the social life, and the material progress of the Union, I have thrown the whole into the form of a book of travels, mingling the instructive with that which is light, sketchy, and incidental.

The plan of the work is a simple one. I commence my journey at Boston, and after traversing

the sea-board States, passing through those of the South and South-west, ascending the valley of the Mississippi, proceeding along that of the Ohio to Western Pennsylvania, passing thence through Western New York by the valley of the Genesee to the Great Lakes, descending the St. Lawrence by the rapids, and sailing up Lake Champlain, and down the Hudson to New York, make my way once more to Boston, terminating my tour, after having thus made the circuit of the Union, at the point at which it commenced. Had I confined myself simply to what I saw and encountered by the way, such a round, embracing such a variety of scenes, and so many latitudes and longitudes within its circumference, would have provided me with ample material for an interesting descriptive work. But I have not so confined myself, but make the description of my peregrinations through the country subservient to what I conceive to be a higher object than the mere painting of scenery and the relation of incidents by the way. My journey is but the frame in which I have as it were encased the more solid parts of the work. With these I never deal until circumstances either suggest them, or force them upon my attention. I identify each subject with some incident or locality, my connexion with, or sojourn in, which has necessarily brought me in contact with it.

The first four chapters are exclusively of a descriptive character, and so far the work in its plan exhibits

no feature to distinguish it from the bulk of books of travels. In chapter IV. I describe the city of New York, but before proceeding further on my way, I take advantage of my stay at the commercial emporium of the continent to give some account, to which chapter V. is devoted, of the commerce and commercial policy of the United States. In this I not only describe the rapid development of American commerce, but also explain at length the relative positions of parties in America in reference to the great economical questions by which the Union is agitated. It will be seen that the locality naturally suggests the subject. The four chapters which follow, comprising my journey to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, are also exclusively devoted to description and incident. Having arrived at Washington, and being then on the Federal stage, the best position from which to survey the Union in connexion with everything that concerns it in its aggregate, I take up general subjects, applicable not to a particular locality, but to the whole Confederacy. In this category, indeed, is that of commerce, but my reasons for dealing with it elsewhere than at Washington are obvious. My first object in treating of homogeneous subjects, is to portray the social life of America, as seen from a point which commands, more or less, a view of it in its aggregate manifestation. Before doing this, however, I devote a chapter to a description of the peculiar social development which Wash-

ington presents, the society of the capital itself differing in many of its essential features, for reasons explained, from society in its general and national aspect. Having depicted life at Washington, I take, in the chapter which follows, a general view of American society. That which will next engage the reader's attention is the political aspect of the United States, in describing which the character of the government is carefully considered, its complex machinery explained, and the line separating federal from local jurisdiction traced as broadly as possible. In this part of the work I also examine into the peculiarity of the Federal system as developed in America, the identification of the national system with it, and the strength which this gives to the political fabric—the cost of government in the United States, and the essential difference which exists between the British and American constitutions. After this follows a chapter descriptive of the Federal legislature, not only portraying both Houses in session, but also explaining their respective modes of conducting the public business. The next and concluding chapter of the first volume describes the judiciary system of the United States, in its federal and local capacities. The second volume opens with an account of party, its organization and its evolutions in America, after which follows a description of the artificial means by which the seaboard States and the States on the Mississippi have been bound together in bonds of indissoluble union

by the complete identification of their interests. I then leave Washington for Virginia; and whilst in the "Slave breeding State," take up the subject of Slavery; treating it both in its political, and in its social, moral and economical aspects. Two chapters follow of an exclusively descriptive character; which bring me, on my way south, to the end of my journeying by railway. It is whilst being jolted over an American highway, in a lumbering and inconvenient stage, that I take up the subject of railways in America, in their national light, and *à-propos* to railways, also the telegraphic system of the Union. Two chapters of a descriptive nature again follow; after which, on reaching the State of Mississippi, while ascending the Mississippi River, I enter at length into the whole question of Repudiation. The next step in my progress brings me to St. Louis; and before leaving the great valley, I take, as it were, a bird's-eye view of the agriculture and agricultural interest of the United States. Ascending the Ohio to Pittsburg in Western Pennsylvania, I find myself in the midst of the mining districts, which suggests to me the subject of the minerals and mining interest of the Union. I then pass through Western New York to Lake Ontario, and by the Falls of Niagara to Buffalo. Before leaving Buffalo, which is at the western extremity of the greatest of all the America canals, I take occasion to glance at the artificial irrigation of the United States; in connexion with which I endeavour to explain the

rivalry which exists between Canada and New York, for the carrying trade of the North-west, and how far the Navigation Laws, in their operation upon the St. Lawrence, injuriously affect our own Province, in competing with its rival. My route then leads me through central and northern New York to the St. Lawrence, which I descend to Montreal; passing by the "Thousand Islands," and shooting the rapids on my way. I then ascend Lake Champlain, proceed overland to Saratoga and Albany, and descend the Hudson to West Point, the military academy of the United States; during my brief stay at which I take a rapid glance at the military spirit and the military establishments of America. Proceeding to New York, my next point is New Haven, the seat of the principal university in the Union, and, whilst visiting it, the subject of literature and education in the United States engages my attention. As kindred to, if not connected with that subject, the next chapter treats of religion in America. From New Haven I proceed to Lowell, the infant Manchester of the Union; and from it, as a favourable point of view, present the reader with a *coup-d'œil* of the manufactures and manufacturing interests of America. Then follow two chapters which conclude the work, the one taking a brief survey of American character, and the physical condition of society in America; and the other venturing upon a peep into the future. The reader will thus see that there are few subjects

connected with either the national or the individual life of the people left untouched. Not only are the more solid portions of the work thus interspersed with sketchy and amusing matter, but they are prepared so as to popularize, as far as possible, the subjects of which they treat; my great object being, in dealing with the driest topics, not only to inform the judgment, but also to impress upon the imagination.

Having thus explained the nature and extent of the materials for it at my command, the object of the work, and the plan on which it is framed, I shall conclude this Introduction by briefly adverting to the spirit in which it is conceived. It has been too much the fashion of late to cheat the public with caricatures, under the false pretence of providing them with a correct portraiture of America. Where prejudice has not given a false colour to every thing which the tourist has observed, ignorance of the topics dealt with has frequently led him into error in attempting to sketch America life. My object is, divesting myself as far as possible of every thing like prejudice either one way or the other, so to make use of the materials at my command, as to present to the reader a faithful and unbiassed account of that great country which is, after all, the only rival that we have to fear. In so doing, I suppress nothing that seems to me to be really pertinent to my subject, merely because it may clash with an English prejudice, at the same

time that I am not deterred from speaking what I conceive to be the truth, through fear of wounding the self-love of the American. But in treating of character, I have been careful throughout the work to distinguish between mere individual peculiarities and national characteristics. The incidents which I describe and the characters which I delineate by the way, must, unless they are particularly adverted to as illustrating some phase of national life, be taken as simple occurrences and personal sketches, having no necessary bearing upon anything beyond themselves. I take care that the intention shall be manifest, whenever they are designed to have a wider signification.

With these remarks upon the materials, object, scope, plan, and spirit of a work, designed as a correct account of a great country, and a faithful portraiture of a great people, I submit it, but not without diffidence, to the candid judgment of the public.

THE WESTERN WORLD;

OR,

TRAVELS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1846-7.

CHAPTER I.

A WINTER PASSAGE OF THE ATLANTIC.

Departure from Liverpool.—First Meal on Board, and its Revelations.—Re-appearance of Passengers.—Congress of Nations.—Characters on Board and their different Occupations. — A Specimen of "Nature's Own."— Amusements.—The Smoking Room. — The Log.—A Storm.—A Nor'-easter.—A New Impediment.—Arrival at Halifax.—Question of Peace or War.—Arrival at Boston.

It was not the brightest of mornings—that of the 4th of January, 1846—when I embarked for the New World on board the royal mail steamship Hibernia. The wind was in the west, and came cold and fitful. The sky, though not wholly overcast, was loaded with clouds, which came up in majestic procession before the breeze; now piled one upon the other, in gorgeous confusion—now broken into fragments, ragged and straggling. It was not altogether what might be called a stormy day, but was certainly not such as a landsman would choose for taking to sea.

The moment of departure was an exciting one. The captain, trumpet in hand, took his station on the larboard paddle-box, and every man was ordered to his post. Almost any species of occupation for the

mind is, at such a moment, a source of relief; and I sought it in watching for the first revolution of the wheels; but so smoothly and noiselessly did the ponderous engines apply themselves to their work, that it was not until I saw the water receding in foam from behind her, that I was aware that the stately ship had started on her voyage. About two hours afterwards the pilot left us. This was like snapping the last tie which bound us to home, and it was not until he waved us adieu that we *felt* our departure. The engines were stopped, to enable him to descend into his little boat, and when they resumed their work, it was not to stop again until they placed the noble ship that bore them safely alongside the quay at Halifax. Night was far advanced ere I went below. The last object ashore, on which my eye rested, was the light on Holyhead, which was then dipping into the channel astern of us. When I got on deck next morning, not a headland was visible on any side. Ireland lay on our right, but the line of our horizon was far above her loftiest peak; behind us was the spacious entrance to the Channel, and before us lay the broad Atlantic, foaming and turbulent.

I do not envy the man who could look, for the first time, on such a scene without emotion. It must be confessed, however, that to enjoy it, particularly on the first day after leaving port, a strong stomach is as essential a requisite as a well-constituted mind. In the former qualification, the majority of my fellow-passengers were deplorably deficient, nor were they long in developing their defects.

When it is tolerably rough, the first meal on board is the great test of the sea-going qualities of those

who have the courage to sit down to it. When we first sat down to dinner, we made a snug little party of 107, of which number only two were ladies. The soup was scarcely on the table, when the gentleman on my right grasped his hat convulsively, and with livid visage hurried from the saloon, in which piece of significant pantomime he was soon imitated by several others. Some for a while struggled manfully against the agony; but at the sight of fish, paled and fled; others retained possession of their self-command, until sauces and condiments loomed upon their already half-jaundiced eyes. Despite the tortures which they suffered, it was ludicrous to see the half-fright with which some regarded what was placed before them, and the irresolution with which others set about disposing of what was handed them. Some, who would not have trembled at a shark, quailed before a piece of cod-fish; and others who, if necessary, would have manfully faced a mad bull, whitened at a sweetbread. The sea makes of some men what conscience is said to make of us all. Before the third course was over, scarcely one-third of the company remained at table. A lively sea had made speedy and sad havoc amongst the keenest appetites; and strong brave men were already stretched in dozens on their backs, puling like children.

Of those who braved out the dinner, scarcely one half ventured at tea-time to come to table; whilst next morning, at breakfast, I was one of nine only who sat down to coffee and hot rolls. The rest had disappeared I could not tell whither. And how deserted now the crowded quarter-deck of yesterday! It was scarcely possible to avoid the conviction that we had touched overnight at some port, and landed

most of our passengers. In the course of the afternoon a few stragglers made their appearance, emerging from the penetralia of the vessel, with sunken cheek, pallid countenance, wandering eye and uncertain step; some of whom ventured to climb to the quarter-deck, whilst others looked wistfully, first at the sky, which seemed reeling overhead, and then at the water, which was leaping and tumbling around them, the sight of which soon gave rise to unmistakeable spasms, which made them hurry back again to their berths.

It was several days afterwards ere the original company, with a few exceptions, re-assembled at dinner. Every morning, during the first week, as one after another was added to the convalescent list, I encountered new faces on deck, as strange to me as if their owners had been taken aboard overnight. It was curious to witness how assiduous they were, as soon as they regained their legs, in their devotions to fresh air, shunning the very entrance to the saloon, and, for some days, drinking weak tea and taking highly spiced soups in an *al fresco* fashion on deck. No sooner had all re-appeared of whom there was any hope, than I found that we had on board the materials for a very respectable congress of nations. We had Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, on the passenger list; Americans, Canadians and Mexicans, Frenchmen and Germans, with a brace of Russians, and a solitary Armenian. We had also a black cook on board. Shem, Ham, and Japhet, were all represented. It was pleasant to observe the peaceable demeanour of so many "natural enemies" to each other. It almost seemed as if such a thing as national antipathy had never found even a lurking place in any of their

bosoms. Amongst such an assemblage, it was but natural to look for a great variety of habit and character. But few read; the great majority walked about all day; some played at whist from morning till night, others at backgammon, and others again at chess. There was a young Englishman who passed amongst his fellow-passengers as chess mad. He constantly talked of the game when he was not playing it; was always playing it when he could beat up an antagonist; and dreamt of it, as he assured me, when he was neither talking of nor playing it. It was his boast, on reaching our journey's end, that he had played 157 games during the voyage, at the rate of eight a day. Most people on board ship disclose their peculiarities. One of my fellow-passengers was constantly indulging in the insane hope, that some homeward-bound ship would come alongside and take him back to Liverpool; being utterly unable, up to the last moment of the voyage, to explain to himself what could have induced him to leave England. Another soon became notorious for his unceasing complaints of cold in his ears, the cure for which lay in "another cap," which he had in his trunk, to which it was his declared intention every morning to resort, but which never made its appearance. Such as affected a knowledge of seamanship, were generally found in the neighbourhood of the compass. Some spent most of their time in all but bodily contact with the funnel, courting its warmth, and smoking nearly as much as it did. Some lived on soups, others entirely on vegetables; some ate next to nothing, and others were constantly eating. There was a good deal of wine consumed too, many blaming the "briny particles," which they were sure were

afloat in the air, for their oft-recurring thirst. I must not overlook one very extraordinary character, who soon became the lion of the company. He was a young man from Alabama, about twenty years of age, and was returning to America after a brief visit to some of his relations in Scotland. He was one of the most perfect specimens of "nature's own," that it was ever my good fortune to witness. He had escaped wild from the prairies to visit Scotland, having never before seen any phase of life, but such as it exhibits on a southern plantation. Nor had his brief contact with civilized life effected any discernible transformation in his character. He used to walk the deck with an "Arkansas toothpick" in his hand, a frightful looking knife, with a pointed blade seven inches long, with which he occasionally whittled, then cleaned his nails, and then varied his amusement by carving his teeth with it. One day he approached the ladies who were on deck, shut his knife with a tremendous click, and asked them why the deck of the steamer was like a pan of new milk? Being unable to discover any reason for this hypothetical resemblance, he informed them, snorting at the same time, in tones which would have done no discredit to a hyena, that it was "because it strengthened our calves;" alluding to the muscular energy required in order to keep one's feet when the ship is tumbling about. One evening, after most of the company had retired to their berths, a couple of Frenchmen remained sipping wine at one of the tables in the lower saloon. Our Alabama friend sat opposite to them and listened to their conversation, which was carried on in French, of which he understood enough to divine the drift of what they were

saying. They were consoling each other at the time for some imaginary evil by abusing England.

"Sir," said the exasperated Alabamian, after they had finished, to the more loquacious of the two, "why don't you speak English?"

"I can't," said the Frenchman, superciliously, and with a strong accent, "it sticks in my throat."

"It didn't stick in your throats though, at Waterloo, when you cried quarter, did it?" retorted the Alabamian, laughing derisively, until he aroused every sleeper in the ship. The Frenchman's "imperial" bristled with rage, but he deemed it prudent to make no reply, retiring soon afterwards with his companion.

Amongst those most delighted with the retort, was a Cornishman, who remained until nearly all had retired, and treated the fiery southerner to sundry potations of brandy and water. Thus occupied, they sat up till one o'clock, by which time they had exhausted the water, although some brandy still remained. The steward being in bed, an additional supply could only be had by the connivance of some of the watch. The Alabamian volunteered to procure it, the Cornishman handing him a shilling to give the man for his trouble. In a few minutes he returned, having replenished the empty jug, and laughing immoderately, as if he had perpetrated a good joke.

"'Cute as he thought himself, I've done him slick," said he.

"What!" asked the Cornishman, "haven't you given the man the shilling?"

"No, to be sure," said he, laughing again, "but I showed it to him,"—and he tossed it towards his companion, as if he thought him quite at liberty to put it into his pocket again.

It was, in fact, a Yankee trick. On asking the man for the water, he had, without saying anything, shown him the shilling, the sight of which so quickened the energies of the poor tar, that he soon returned with the *quid pro quo*. No sooner, however, had the Alabamian got the water, than he coolly walked down to the cabin, repudiating his implied contract, and leaving the sailor in a state of stupor at his petty rascality and impudence. The Cornishman laughed at the trick, but obliged him nevertheless to seek the man out and give him his promised reward.

A sea voyage is, generally speaking, monotonous enough. Any incident, however trifling, goes some length to relieve its tedium. A ship in sight is an event which occasions an excitement that would appear ludicrous to people ashore. But on the dreary solitudes of the ocean, you hail such a sight as you would, after long absence, the appearance of a valued friend. It breaks in upon the sense of loneliness, which oppresses the voyager. From the moment of her appearance, until she slowly recedes from you, as the eternal circle of your horizon rises above her, she is an object of intense interest to all. You wonder what and whom she carries, where she has been, and whither she is going, and which of you will first touch the busy world again, from which you are now separated by the heaving billows. It was also a frequent amusement to us to watch the ludicrous gambollings of the porpoises, as they crossed our track in long and regular processions; and when they approached very near, how eagerly would we all crowd to the ship's side, to witness their pantomime in the water! A real whale was too important a

personage to cheapen his visits by their frequency. But how we watched the monster, when he did appear! and to what exclamations did he not give rise from old and young, as he "blew his nose," as the Alabamian termed blowing a column of water high into the air. In the absence of other occupation, I occasionally found amusement in watching the "multitudinous sea," as its restless billows leaped and foamed around me; and could sometimes fancy, as they surged, and rolled, and curled before the blast, that they were endowed with consciousness, and nodded to me, as they passed, in token of recognition.

Day after day passed wearily on, each scarcely marked by any distinctive feature from that which preceded or followed it. There was little to vary the routine of our duties or our pastimes. The breakfasts were all alike, as were also the dinners, with the exception that, towards the end of the voyage, singing was introduced, at the latter meal, with the dessert, when there was something awful as well as romantic in hearing the chorus of a hundred voices added to the howling of the blast and the splashing of the waves.

The smoking room was a temporary erection on the main deck, a little in advance of the saloon, and so built as to enclose the capstan. There, in bad weather, the open deck being otherwise preferred, such as chose to regale themselves with tobacco, assembled shortly after dinner. It might have accommodated five and twenty comfortably; but when it was wet and stormy, I have seen double that number crammed into it, when the state of its atmosphere may well be conceived from the simultaneous exhalation of fifty cigars. Here the song was again raised, negro melo-

dies and political pasquinades, a great proportion of the passengers being Americans, being most in favour, and thus an hour or two were frequently cheerily spent. The over-crowded enclosure sometimes presented a very curious spectacle. As we were not always vouchsafed the luxury of a lamp, but for the light of the consuming tobacco we should sometimes have been in total darkness. Familiar voices were heard, when familiar faces were scarcely discernible — the fitful ruddy glare of the cigars ever and anon bringing them momentarily out, with Rembrandt effect, from the darkness; the whole scene looking as wild and unnatural as the phantasmagoria of a troubled dream. And all this in the middle of the Atlantic, with the stout ship that bore us tumbling about, like a reeling drunkard, through the darkness; with the heavy wind, laden with rain, beating against her in angry gusts, and moaning through her shrunken rigging, and with sea after sea sent in shivers over her deck, and falling heavily around us. Yet the jest, the laugh, the song, and the smoking went on within, apparently with as much indifference on the part of those present, as if waving corn fields and smiling meadows had surrounded them.

The turning point of each day, as to interest as well as to time, was noon, when the observations were taken. How anxiously did we all await the moment when the result of the last twenty-four hours' sailing would be posted up for general inspection in the cabin! Then would arise a series of daily congratulations or murmurings, according to the result. No passenger can reconcile himself at sea to anything short of two hundred miles a day; and on our reckoning, one day, showing a run of only eighty

miles, a state of feeling pervaded the saloon, which, but for the opportune appearance of a good dinner, might have ripened into mutiny. Some, by a process of reasoning, intelligible only to themselves, came to the conclusion, that we might as well have been standing still; some blamed the ship, others the captain; but nobody thought of blaming the weather. There were a few who bitterly inveighed against their own luck; whilst our Yankee friends consoled themselves with predictions of what the American boats would do, should most of them burst in the attempt. But, after all, what weathercocks are men! Next day we had a splendid run—250 miles—and what ship was ever in such favour as the Hibernia then? The wind, which had scarcely veered a point since we left Liverpool, gradually increased, until, at length, on the ninth day out, we were driven about on the wings of a hurricane.

A storm at sea! It is a night witnessed never to be forgotten. The warring of the elements may be imposing upon land, but it is truly terrible at sea. Trees may be torn up by the roots, and stately mansions may be levelled by the blast; but the strong, solid earth is unmoved whilst the hurricane sweeps on in its path. But when the winds and waters meet, how different the result! It is on no impassive surface that the tempest then expends its fury, but on a sensitive element, which reflects its slightest frown, and trembles at its gentlest breath. When one sees the sky serene and peaceful above, and the ocean lying calm as a sleeping child below, it is difficult to realize the extent to which all this beautiful quiescence of nature may be disturbed. But convulsion is bred in the lap of tranquillity. Even in its calmest

moods, the Atlantic is never wholly at rest; its surface may be as smooth as glass, but its mighty volume is ever heaving and undulating, as if disturbing forces were at work below. Thus it will sometimes continue for days, glancing in the sunlight like a waving mirror. A change from this state of rest is generally heralded by slight puffs of wind, which here and there darken the surface of the water, as the breath tarnishes the polished steel. As the wind becomes stronger and steadier, the whole scene undergoes a transformation: first the ripple, then the wave, and finally the raging tempest. I have known a few hours suffice to produce this change, obscuring the blue sky with drifting clouds, and lashing the quiet sea into billowy uproar.

About ten in the morning of the ninth day, it was blowing a half gale with us; the sea running very high, and the ship labouring heavily. By noon it had increased to a hurricane; and, as far as the eye could reach, the ocean presented but one mass of drifting foam. Sea and sky seemed literally to commingle; the sky poured down its deluge, and the waves shot up their spray. The aspect of the ocean, at such a time, is scarcely to be depicted. On all hands its surging waters leap in angry tumult around you. As they swell and curl and break, and the white foam rushes down their dark leaden sides, the waves roar and hiss, as do the breakers on the beach; and loaded as the air then is with vapour and rain, an indistinctness is thrown over the whole scene, which adds greatly to its terrors. The good ship stood her trial right well. Now she quivered on the top of a huge wave, from which she plunged, burying her prow deep in the trough, and beating back the resisting

water in foam from her stalwart shoulders; she then recovered herself to meet the coming billow, up whose steep sides she would bravely climb, and plunge again to breast another. Thus she laboured for four-and-twenty hours, sometimes standing, as it were, on her prow, and at others lying almost on her beam-ends. Now and then, despite the most cautious steering, the baffled waves would strike her with a force, which made her quiver again from stem to stern; but she generally revenged herself by sending the assailant billows, in clouds of spray, high up amongst the rigging, whence they would descend in drenching showers over her whole length. All this time the engines kept steadily at their work, the tempest impeding, but not wholly interrupting her progress. About noon next day the wind greatly moderated, and by 6 P. M. had fallen below a half gale. The sea rapidly fell, and with this change came a period of inexpressible relief, the crew seeking repose after their exertions, and the very ship seeming to sleep after her heavy travail and fatigue.

As we crossed the eastern edge of the great bank, the sky cleared, and the temperature fell, but there came no change in the direction of the steady adverse wind, which now blew fresh, bearing the sharp frost upon its wings, from the icy coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland. For three days afterwards, it was intensely cold and intensely bright, the ocean glittering under the brilliant sunlight like a mass of moving diamonds. On approaching the coast of Nova Scotia, the temperature moderated, the wind veering round to the north-east. On Sunday morning, the 14th day out, we were within sixty miles of Halifax, and, of course, looked forward to making port that

afternoon. But the horizon behind us rapidly thickened and darkened, and a few flakes of snow which eddied in the air gave unmistakeable token that a storm was in our wake. Half an hour afterwards, we were lying to, under bare poles, in the midst of a raging north-easter, which whirled the snow in blinding masses about the ship. There was no alternative left us but to keep her in deep water, which was effected by means of constant soundings, which sometimes showed a depth of forty fathoms, and, at other times, of three hundred—enough to convince us that we were in rather a dangerous neighbourhood. The wind continued to blow with unabated fury, and the snow to fall in undiminished quantities, for fifteen hours, during which it was impossible to see more than half a ship's length a-head. About midnight, there came a change, but only in the shape of a new impediment. The wind suddenly chopped round again to the north-west; the heavy clouds, flying from its icy breath, were speedily rolled away like a curtain; as if by magic, the whole heavens were at once displayed, and the bright stars twinkled cheerily down upon us from a sky of the deepest blue. We immediately resumed our course, but in half an hour's time were compelled once more to lie to. A dense vapour, which rose from the surface of the water like steam from a boiling cauldron, soon became so impervious to the sight, as to prevent us from seeing, even in daylight, beyond twenty yards from the ship's side. In addition to the detention caused us by the snow storm, this second impediment kept us, for thirty-six hours longer, to our soundings. The cold, all this time, was most intense. I once ventured on deck, just as the lead was heaved: and as

the men were drawing in the cord again, I made bold to take hold of it with my naked hand—it was as if I had grasped a bar of red-hot iron. The mist which enveloped us congealed and fell in tiny flakes on the deck; and this, added to the spray which, whenever it broke over us, froze as soon as it touched the ship, soon overlapped deck, paddle-boxes, rigging, and every prominent object on board, except the hot funnel, with a thick coating of ice, of which we must have carried with us nearly a hundred tons into Halifax. On the morning of the sixteenth day, the mist disappeared, and such as chose to face the cold were on deck, eagerly looking out for land. I was in the saloon about ten o'clock, when the cry of land was shouted overhead. I rushed upon deck, and there, directly a-head of us, lay the coast of Nova Scotia, like a stranded iceberg. We hit it about twenty miles above the entrance to the deep and well-sheltered bay of Halifax, long before entering which we could discern the position of this town, by the thin cloud of bluish looking smoke, which rose from its wooden fires. The wharves were crowded, and we were greeted with cheers on our arrival. Everything around was such as to remind the Englishman that he had passed to a new hemisphere. The deep snow, the wooden wharves and houses, the furs in which the people were clad, the enormous piles of cordwood upon the shore, and the merry jingling of the sleigh-bells, afforded undeniable proof, if such were wanting, that we were far from home. We went ashore in parties, and made merry for the evening. Our relations with the United States, which were then rather critical, I found to be the chief subject of interest, and the chief topic of conversation.

"I hope we'll have war," said a young man, a native Nova Scotian, who stood near me at the bar of the principal hotel.

"Why so?" I inquired.

"Won't the prizes come in here if we have?" was the reply, given with an emphasis which showed that the speaker was in earnest and enjoyed the prospect. "'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good," is a proverb of universal recognition. Let earth and ocean be deluged with blood, let continent be arrayed against continent, and peace and plenty give way to wholesale misery and crime, some would be sure to fatten on the general calamity; and there were few in Halifax who would not have welcomed war, with all its horrors, because it would have brought prizes into their harbour.

When we crossed the Bay of Fundy next day, it was as calm as a summer lake, although there are times when no sea on earth can assume an angrier mood. On the following morning, we had a stiff breeze off the land, which retarded our progress. Towards evening the wind fell, but was succeeded by another fog, which compelled us to lie to again for nearly twelve hours more, in sight of some of the lights which lead into the harbour of Boston. It was ten o'clock next day ere the steamer reached the dock; and glad enough were we all to land, after a tempestuous passage of nineteen days' duration.

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPITAL OF NEW ENGLAND.

The Harbour and Approaches to the City.—Classic Ground.—Appearance of Boston from the Bay.—Custom House Officers.—Entrance into the City.—The United States Hotel, and its Dependencies, Texas and Oregon.—Stroll through the City.—The Commercial Quarter.—Variety of Craft at the Quays.—Steamers.—Wholesale Quarter.—Retail Quarters.—The Common.—The State House.—The Fashionable Quarter.—Washington-street.—Pedestrians.—Mount Auburn.

COLD was the morning, crisp was the air, and bright was the sky, when we entered the harbour of Boston. There was scarcely a breath of wind stirring, but the waters of the spacious bay that fronts the town were slightly agitated by the uneasy swell which came rolling in from the Atlantic; the force of which was broken by the screen of islands protecting the entrance to the harbour. The sky was without a cloud; and the numerous masses of floating ice with which the deep blue water was speckled, looked like so many ornaments of frosted silver on a basis of steel. Some of the islands are fortified, one very strongly so, its sides being artificially sloped down to the water's edge, so as to remove every impediment to the free range of its guns. Numerous vessels, of all sizes and rigs, floated lazily on the bay, conspicuous amongst which was the frigate Cumberland, which has since played a not unimportant part in the Mexican war.

The deck was covered with a slight sprinkling of snow, which creaked beneath our feet, as we paced rapidly to and fro for warmth. It was an interesting moment, and I kept above notwithstanding the cold. Around me were the spots in which some of the most important episodes in the history of the New World were enacted; localities held classic by every American. Here was first planted the germ of the greatest colonial fabric that ever existed, and here was first struck the blow which revolutionized it into independent nationality. It was here that imperial Britain received her first and her rudest shock, which in its issues, wrested a continent from her grasp. Here first settled the stern and sturdy champions of that religious liberty, which they themselves so grossly outraged as soon as they had the power. I was afloat on the very waters into which was hurled the obnoxious, because taxed, tea, and in the midst of the very echoes which reverberated to the first cry of the revolution. No Englishman can look upon such a scene and escape, even if he would, the memories of the past. Its mementos are every where around him. Here are the memorials of a past race; there floats the emblem of a new power; whilst, side by side with the relics of colonial times, stand the issues and the trophies of independence. There is every thing to connect the past in mournful interest with the present and the future. English names are plentiful around you, and many objects within view have an English look about them. Yet, when the Englishman steps ashore, it is on a foreign, though a friendly land.

As seen from the bay, there is no city in the Union which has a more imposing appearance than Boston.

It seems to envelope, from its apex to its base, a conical hill, which rises from the water with a slight acclivity; the successive terraces in which it mounts to the summit, being crowned by the spacious dome of the "State House," the seat of the legislature of Massachusetts. In addition to being thus ornamental to the city, this prominent object is highly useful to the mariner, the gilded cone at its top being discernible at sea long before any surrounding object becomes visible. At its base the town appears girdled with a frame-work of masts, sustaining a network of rigging. To give life to the scene, steamers are plying constantly to and fro, connecting the city with its different suburbs. That great shapeless mass, just seen a little to the right in the distance, looming up over every thing in its vicinity, is the obelisk erected on Bunker's Hill to commemorate a battle, which if not exactly won by the Americans, was the first irretrievable step taken by them in a long, eventful, and ultimately successful struggle. Hundreds of the "tall chimneys" in our manufacturing districts have quite as imposing an appearance as has Bunker's Hill monument. The small villages which are scattered about in every direction, glistening in the morning sunlight, are so many suburbs of the city, with which it is connected by long wooden bridges, with the exception of the insular suburb of East Boston, where we land, and with which, being separated from the town by a branch of the harbour, the communication is maintained by steam ferry-boats.

Landed at length—and if the reader will accompany me, we will take a stroll together through the town.

It is early, but the custom-house officers are at their posts. They do not look very promising, but we

pass without difficulty or delay; the examination being more nominal than otherwise. I afterwards found that civility and courtesy were uniformly extended by the federal officers, both to strangers and natives landing in the country—a pleasing contrast to the wanton and unmannerly conduct which is sometimes pursued in our own ports, particularly in Liverpool, where custom-house officials too frequently conduct themselves as if vulgarity and insolence constituted the chief qualifications for office.

Carriages now convey us, baggage and all, to the ferry-boat; which, in its turn, conveys us, carriages, baggage and all, in less than five minutes, to the city. Our first object is to search for an hotel, and refresh ourselves with a thorough ablution and a comfortable meal on land. Passing the Tremont House, which is full, we draw up at the United States Hotel, an enormous pile of red brick, perforated by, I am afraid to say, how many rows of windows having a large wing on one side called Texas, and one in process of completion, on the other, to be called Oregon. The next addition made will, doubtless, be California. We are ushered up a marble staircase into a spacious hall, the floor of which looks like a gigantic chequer-board, being composed of alternate squares of black and white marble, looking exceedingly elegant, but, during this season of the year, being both very cold and very slippery. We apply for rooms at the bar, which, in the usual sense of the term, is no bar, but the counting-house of the establishment, in which a clerk, elaborately caparisoned, sits enthroned, at a considerable elevation, before a desk, which in point of cost and construction would be a piece of extravagance in the Bank parlour. The walls around

him are literally covered with bells, each having beneath it the number of the room to which it corresponds, and they count by hundreds. My flesh creeps at the bare contemplation of the possibility of their being all rung at once.

We dine comfortably in a private room, to gain which we have to thread countless lobbies, lying at all conceivable angles to each other. How a warm meal finds its way such a distance from a fixed kitchen, is a mystery to us. But notwithstanding the appalling difficulties obviously in the way,—for it is brought all the way from Texas to Oregon,—it is as speedily as it is well served. So, now that we have dined, for a stroll through the town,—and let us first inspect its commercial quarter.

Although Boston is almost entirely surrounded by water, you perceive that the real harbour is not very extensive. Some of the wharves are built of wood, others are securely faced with stone, the latter presenting a very substantial appearance. The depth of the water enables vessels of all sizes, devices, and rigging, to commingle, as it were, with the houses and warehouses that line the shore, some of the slips running short distances into the land, and being flanked by piles of massive and durable buildings, exclusively set apart for commercial purposes. Here is a slip devoted apparently to the exclusive use and occupation of European packets; large placards, attached to the shrouds, announcing their destinations and times of sailing. Here we are now in front of the coasting craft; and an extraordinary medley do they present. What a variety of rig and build; and how unfit some of the smaller ones appear for the dangerous navigation of the American coast! Having

grown a little familiar with them, you can almost tell, from their appearance, between what points they trade. That substantial looking schooner which you see scudding before a gentle land breeze, will be off Cape Cod to-night, in her intricate and circuitous voyage to New York. That prim looking brig, with her masts so tall and tapering, her spars so trim, her rigging so regular, her sham port-holes so very white, and her hull of so shiny a black, will, as soon as she clears—and she is already loaded—be off for the Delaware, and be moored, in a few days, in front of the Quaker city. The cluster of less elegant looking craft, which lie a little beyond her, are, as their placards inform us, "direct for Charleston," for "Mobile," or for "New Orleans;" that is to say, as direct as baffling winds and the gulf stream will admit of. But what have we here? A whole slip full of small fry, packed as closely together as herring boats at a fishing station, and their slender masts standing as thick as bulrushes in a swamp. There can be no mistake about them, their rig and rakish contour bespeaking them for the Chesapeake. They are, in fact, the far-famed Baltimore clippers; and "For Baltimore direct" say most of them. You may well stare, but that extraordinary naval abortion, which you are now contemplating, is a veritable steamer. True, it seems to be built of Bristol board; but, in these matters, such is the taste here. It is for Newport, Rhode Island, and has to ply along one of the stormiest of coasts. The huge upper deck, stretched, from end to end, on such slender posts, looks as if it would flutter before the slightest breeze, like the canvass spread over a peripatetic menagerie. It seems, in fact, to be neither more nor less than a huge compound of

scantlings and white paint, with a touch of black at some of the seams. Put a match to it, and off goes the inflammable monster like gun-cotton. Its engines are good as compared with those on the Mississippi, though they would cut but a sorry figure on a stormy night off the Isle of Man. As the steam hisses through the escape-pipe, the whole mass tumbles like a very jelly. Yet, notwithstanding all this, you have before you one of the strongest class of American steamers. You have yet to witness those constructed for the navigation of the inland waters. But let me not anticipate your surprise.

Along the wharves there is every appearance of great activity; and, thickly strewn around you, are all the insignia of an extensive commerce. Raw cotton in countless bales; piles of manufactured goods for the South American and Chinese markets; whole acres covered with parallel rows of clean white barrels, some of them well-nigh bursting with flour, others full of salt; hogsheads of sugar, and others of leaking molasses; stacks of leather, and pyramids of marble blocks; bags of coffee, chests of tea, and bulging orange boxes, are discernible on every hand. By each pile is a clerk, busily noting all that may be added to, or subtracted from it; dealers, wholesale and retail, masters and men, consignors and consignees, and light and heavy porters, are bustling about; the apparent confusion being heightened by the drays, some of which are rattling empty, and others crawling heavily laden, over the hard granite.

Leaving the water-side, you enter some short crooked streets of warehouses, almost as dark and dingy as Tooley-street, or Thames-street. Most of them are fireproof, and seem to be mailed in iron

shutters. Passing them, we come to the Irish quarter, which, as usual, having no attractions, but the reverse, we may as well retrace our steps a little, and make for the heart of the town.

You are surprised to find, in a country like this, with so much spare land, and so many symmetrical towns built upon it, the streets of one of its finest capitals so straitened and devious. But this is easily accounted for. In the first place the foundations of Boston were laid ere the old irregular system of building had been departed from; and in the next, although there is land enough around it, the precise ground which the city occupies is of rather limited dimensions. It consists of an irregular peninsula, with a very uneven surface, the strip of ground called "the neck," joining it to the main land. This peninsula, to which the city proper is confined, is covered with houses, and the city now relieves itself from the pressure of population by means of the many small towns and villages, which are scattered like so many colonies over the mainland and islands around it.

"A fine town is this Baltimore!" said I, one day, to a new Englander with whom I was conversing in the capital of Maryland; "it is a pity that Boston is not as spacious in its accommodations and as regular in its plan."

"What we want in Boston," said he, "is *territory* to build on. If we were as flush of it as they are here, we would make them sing small in the city way, that's a fact."

It must be confessed, to the credit of the corporation of Boston, that they are doing all in their power to diminish the vocal performances of other communities in this respect, many of the more crowded

thoroughfares having recently been both widened and straightened.

As might be expected, as you recede from the water-side, the business of the town assumes more of a retail character. As you advance towards the centre, you come in contact with its different markets and with its banking, civic, and other public establishments. Fanneuil Market is inferior in size, but superior in architecture and internal arrangements, to that of Liverpool. Immediately beyond is the very focus of the retail business of the town. The shops are large, having, in general, a wider frontage than with us. They are gorged with goods, so much so as literally to ooze out at doors and windows; and what a gaudy flaunting show they make! Piled in tempting masses on the hard brick pavement, you are ready to stumble over goods at every step you take, whilst from the upper windows stream whole pieces of flaring calicos and gaudy ribbons; the whole impressing one with the idea that business was making a holiday of it, and had donned, for the occasion, its most showy habiliments. A winding and irregular street now leads us up a rather steep ascent, in climbing which, we find ourselves in front of old Fanneuil Hall. There is no building in America held in such reverence as this. It is held sacred from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Lakes to the Gulf, as the "cradle of liberty," and the place in which the tocsin of the revolution was first sounded. It is large, but, in an architectural point of view, unworthy of notice, its historic associations constituting its chief attraction. We now advance up State-street, a fine business street, but neither so spacious nor imposing as Tremont Row into which it leads. Passing the

Tremont House, we emerge upon "the Common," a large open space, about seventy acres in extent, in the upper part of the town. For this miniature park the Bostonians are indebted to the munificence of a private individual, who devised it to the corporation, on condition of its being left perpetually open for the health and recreation of the citizens. On a commanding site on one side of this common, and overlooking the whole town, the circumjacent suburbs, and a vast stretch of sea and land beyond, stands the State House, with its classic colonnade, surmounted by the dome already alluded to. In the large hall, as you enter it, is a statue of Washington, from the chisel of Chantrey, the chief features of the interior being the two chambers of the legislature. The House of Representatives is a large square room, capable of accommodating about 400 persons, scantily ornate, and looking as cold and comfortless as a country meeting-house. The Senate Chamber is a smaller apartment, and somewhat more attractive in its appearance. Its chief ornament, and placed over the door opposite the speaker's chair, is an old drum, captured in one of the earlier battles of the Revolution. It is placed there as an incitement to American youth, and as a terror to all British drummers. It is not beaten, that I am aware of, in the senate, but it by no means follows therefrom that hollow sounds are alien to that body.

In the more immediate vicinity of the Common is the fashionable quarter of Boston. The terraces, which line it on either side, consist of spacious mansions built in the main of brick and granite: the hall doors being approached by granite or marble steps, and the window-sills and capping being fre-

quently composed of marble. Almost every house is garnished by Venetian blinds outside the windows, the green colour of which contrasts pleasingly with the red brick, sometimes painted of a deeper red, with white pencillings at the joinings, which impart to the whole a light, airy, and elegant appearance. Everything about these comfortable-looking dwellings is scrupulously clean; indeed, generally speaking, the credit of great cleanness is due to Boston as a whole, being admirably situated with respect to drainage, and its opportunities, in this respect, not having been neglected. But having glanced at their town, it is now time to take a passing peep at the Bostonians themselves. Let us then to Washington-street—the Regent-street of Boston—as it is now the hour for promenade. You had better, however, put up your cigar case, for smoking is not allowed in the streets. You may chew until you expectorate yourself away, and may poison your dwelling with smoke to your heart's content, but a whiff in the open air is a luxury not to be enjoyed in Boston under a penalty of five dollars.

This is Washington-street, as varying in width, and as irregular in its architecture, as the Strand. The shops on either side make a goodly display of rich, tempting, and ornamental wares; the pavement is spacious, and covered with pedestrians, who pass on, without looking to the right or to the left, or linger, as their fancy may dictate, by the "Dry Goods Store," the "Hardware Store," the "Book Store," the "Grocery Store," the "Hat Store," or the "Shoe Store,"—for they are all "Stores," without a single *shop* amongst them. Let no Englishman insinuate to any American that he keeps a shop—

that would be a grade too low for a free and enlightened citizen to stoop to. In all this flitting crowd, you can scarcely point to a single individual who is not well dressed. The Americans cannot afford to be niggard of broad-cloth, for there is no nation on earth in which the coat goes so far to make the man. Fustian (not moral) is little known in America. Canvass-back ducks they have in abundance, but no canvass-backed people. The countenances of those we pass bespeak a very general diffusion of intelligence, an intellectuality of expression being, as I afterwards discovered, more common to the Bostonians than to the inhabitants of any other city in the Union. The ladies form a very fair proportion of the throng. They are generally of the middle height, well rounded, of a good carriage, with features as pleasing as their complexions are florid. The bracing air of the seaboard, however, is fatal to many of them, groups of consumptive patients having annually to fly from New England into the interior. They are not shy, and yet, at the same time, are not bold; discarding in their promenades the affected prudery with which they are so generally charged, and acting, as they pass, as if they saw no reason why a daughter of Adam should not look upon a son of Eve.

A view of Boston would be incomplete without an allusion, however brief, to Mount Auburn, its chief cemetery. Although not situated within the precincts of the town, a more appropriate spot for the purposes to which it is consecrated, can scarcely be conceived than this. It is very extensive, its surface being beautifully varied by gentle undulations, the sides of some of which are already clustered with tombs. Well-kept walks and avenues are laid out through it in

every direction, skirted in the summer time with the richest foliage, the principal avenues taking their respective names from the trees which predominate on either side. Here and there, too, you come upon a small still pond, fringed with shrubbery, and reposing, as it were, in a state of funereal seclusion. If anything is calculated to deprive death of its terrors, it is thus preparing a sweet resting-place for the dead. How different from our foul, fetid, and over-crowded burying-places in the heart of London, which make the grave hideous to the imagination! But in Boston, as in Paris, they have taken these things under municipal control, not permitting the clergy, as with us, to turn to pecuniary account even the last debt of nature. The great objection to the *coup-d'œil* of Mount Auburn is, that there is too much sameness in its monuments. Many are exceedingly elegant, but there can be traced amongst them a similitude which soon palls upon one. In this respect it falls short of the Parisian cemeteries, but in none other, for, if it has not the artificial adornments, it is certainly not bedaubed with the frippery of Père-la-Chaise.

But the ramble becomes wearisome, and as I have to start soon by train for New York, it is time to return to our hotel.

CHAPTER III.

A NIGHT BETWEEN BOSTON AND NEW YORK.

Different Routes to New York.—A Railway Carriage.—Aspect and Character of the Country.—Worcester.—Awkward Partings.—A Night Scene on the Rail.—Diversified Occupations of the New England Farmers.—Arrival and Detention at Norwich.—Unavailing Scramble for Accommodations.—A hearty Meal.—Flexibility of American Character.—Liberation from Norwich.—New London.—An Obelisk and an Incident.—Questions and Answers.—Arrival at New York.

In addition to the round-about journey by sea, the city of New York is approached from Boston by three different routes, each of which is a combination of railway and steamboat travelling. The Long Island railway being blocked up by snow, I selected the route by Norwich in preference to that by Stonington, the former curtailing the sea voyage by about thirty miles, a serious consideration, as the navigation of the Sound was then rather perilous, owing to the masses of ice with which it was obstructed.

As there was then only one train a day for the West, and as for the first forty miles two railways were blended into one, the bustle and confusion which occurred at the station before starting are perfectly indescribable. Everybody was getting into the wrong "car," and everybody's luggage into the wrong

van. At length, after a hubbub, which would have been more amusing had it been less intense, the long heavy train started at four P. M. for Worcester. As it is my intention, in a future chapter, to present the reader with a general view of railways and railway travelling in America, I shall avoid, at present, all allusion to details connected with them, with the exception of a brief description of the carriage in which I found myself seated, and which was a specimen of a class very common in the United States. It consisted of one great compartment, constructed to accommodate sixty people. It was like a small church upon wheels. At either end was a door leading to a railed platform in the open air; from door to door stretched a narrow aisle, on either side of which was a row of seats, wanting only book-boards to make them look exactly like pews, each being capable of seating two reasonably sized persons. The car was so lofty that the tallest man present could promenade up and down the aisle with his hat on. In winter, two or three seats are removed from one side to make way for a small stove; and, as I was rather late in taking my place, the only vacant seat I could find was one on the pew adjoining this portable fire-place. My immediate companion was a gentlemanly looking man under forty years of age, a loose drab coat enveloping his person, and a bushy fur cap covering his head. Directly opposite him sat a lady of about sixteen stone weight, who crushed up against the side of the car a gaunt lanky Vermonter, in such a manner as to render me apprehensive that she would occasion involuntary squirts of the tobacco juice which he was industriously distilling from his quid. Her travelling stock consisted of a carpet-bag, almost as plump and bulky as herself, which, as she

was bringing herself to a comfortable bearing, she consigned to the safe keeping of the gentleman in the drab coat. The poor man had leisure afterwards to repent of the preference shown him, for having once hoisted it upon his knee, the owner, although she constantly kept her eye fixed upon it, never offered to remove it. He could not put it on the floor, which was moist with expectoration; nor could he put it on the stove, which was already getting red-hot. He had no alternative but to carry it the whole night upon his knee; but then the ladies are used to such attentions in America. I had no reason to complain so long as I was not the man in drab.

Finding, ere long, the heat of the stove rather uncomfortable, I repaired to one of the platforms attached to the car, where, for some time, I enjoyed myself in the open air, smoking a cigar and observing the country through which we passed. It was as level, and, in a scenic point of view, as uninteresting as marine deposits, of which it seems to be a specimen, generally are. The snow, with which it was then covered, gave it a dreary and monotonous aspect. Here and there were some slight undulations, swelling occasionally into small hillocks, crowned with stunted evergreens, the most luxuriant growth of the arid sandy soil. It is well cleared, and in the neighbourhood of Worcester affords considerable pasturage. Every now and then we came up with a neat little village, the houses of which, from their colour, were scarcely distinguishable from the snow; the churches, too, with their trim wooden spires, being painted white to their very weathercocks. If anything were wanting to prove the indomitable spirit of the pilgrim-band who, a little more than two

centuries ago, laid the foundation of the Transatlantic empire, it would be found in the very character of the soil on which their first efforts were so successfully expended. Instead of seeking the rich alluvial tracts, which might yield them plenty without the previous penalty of toil, or the luxuriant savannahs of the south, where the gaudy magnolia perfumed the air and the wild vine intertrellised with the honeysuckle, they planted themselves in a high latitude, on a scanty soil, contented to labour, so long as their consciences were left free. Their landing-place was a rock, flanked on one side by the ocean, and on the other by a succession of sandy plains. What could be more cheerless than their prospects? Yet, by unceasing and patient toil, they soon converted their unpromising heritage into a garden, along the surface of which thriving communities sprung up, as if by magic; and, like a germ of indestructible vitality, from which emanates the future giant of the forest, soon expanded into that great social and political system, which, in its colossal strides, threatens ere long to monopolize the continent.

I had not been long engaged in such reflections, when from the next car, the platform of which adjoined that on which I was standing, emerged the "conductor," alias the check-taker — who is, in America, a peripatetic, instead of, as with us, a stationary functionary. Having received my ticket, he was about entering the car which I had just quitted, when he stopped short, and without speaking a word, eyed me for a moment, as if he took a great interest in me. At length, having permitted his quid to change sides in his mouth, he observed, in a tone which brooked not of contradiction, that it was

"tarnation cold." To this I readily assented; when, finding me of a communicative disposition, he offered me his tobacco-box, and inquired if I preferred standing where I was to being seated within.

"'Tis but a poor choice between being frozen and being roasted," I observed.—He looked at me again, as if he questioned my judgment, and then said—

"You're a stranger in these parts, I reckon." I replied that I was; and, to avoid questions, continued, that I had arrived that very day by the "Hibernia," after a very boisterous passage; that I was on my way to New York, whence I intended to proceed further south, and after seeing the country, to return to Europe before the close of the year. All this he received with great apathy, and then intimated that he was merely acting the part of a friend in telling me that I would be safer inside.

"Is there any danger?" inquired I.

"Supposing there was to be an accident," said he, "you wouldn't stand no chance here."

"Do they frequently occur with you?" I demanded somewhat hastily.

"We do sometimes run off the rail, that's all;" said he, without the slightest emotion; and then passed into the car without deigning to know how I received the announcement. There was but a pitiful choice, certainly, between an instantaneous crush to death, and a slow broil by the stove; but preferring the latter, I repaired to my place, and submitted to it until the train reached Worcester. The shades of night had, by this time, deepened around us; and the merry lights which twinkled from the windows, and gleamed upon the snow, told of comfort within, whatever might be the rigour of the season without.

The chief object of interest—a melancholy interest—in Worcester, is the Lunatic Asylum; a State Establishment, large, commodious, admirably regulated, and, alas! but too replete with inmates. So much, however, has already been written and circulated concerning them, that it is unnecessary for me here to dwell upon the nature and regulations of the different establishments to which the crimes and the misfortunes of society in America give rise.

For some minutes it appeared to me as if the Bedlam hard by had been let loose upon the station, or depôt, as it is universally called in America. To give a true picture of the confusion—the rushing to and fro—and the noise, with which all this was accompanied, is impossible. Some pounced upon the refreshment-room, as if they fancied it the up-train, and in danger of an immediate start; others flew about, frantically giving orders, which there was no one to obey; whilst by far the greater number were assuring themselves of the safety of their baggage. This was very necessary, inasmuch as the line here branched off into two; the one proceeding to Albany, and the other to Norwich, *en route* to New York. It is by no means an uncommon thing for a passenger to find, at his journey's end, that his luggage has, from this point, taken an independent course for itself, pursuing the shortest road to the far-west, whilst its owner is on his way south, or *vice versa*. This sometimes arises from the luggage being put into the wrong van, and at others from the vans themselves being put upon the wrong lines. Sometimes the separations are most heart-rending—husbands and wives, parents and children, being sent off in different directions. I found afterwards that this was the case

with a lady in the carriage immediately behind that in which I sat. She had been torn both from her husband and her bandbox. She had no concern about the former, as she said he knew how to take care of himself; but her new velvet bonnet, oh!——She consoled herself by abusing the conductor, who bore it meekly for some time, but was at last goaded into telling her that that was not the way in which to treat a gentleman, and that she had no business to get into the wrong train; from which he derived but little satisfaction, as she insisted the whole way, that it was the train that was going wrong.

Detached from the Albany train, we were soon on our way to Norwich, led thither by an asthmatic locomotive, which went wheezing and puffing along at the rate of twelve miles an hour over the slippery rails. Although nearly threescore people were packed closely together, the utmost silence pervaded the car. Every one seemed as if he were brooding over some terrible secret, with which he would burst if he dared. The fat lady was already asleep, her unfortunate neighbour still patiently nursing her carpet-bag. One after another the company dropped into temporary forgetfulness, and before we had been an hour from Worcester two-thirds of them were asleep. The heads of some rested upon their hands, those of others fell upon their shoulders, whilst those of others again dropped upon their chests. A solitary lamp burned at one end of the car, and it was interesting to watch the revelations of character which it afforded, as its sickly light fell upon the faces of the sleepers. Some snored, others whistled through their noses, whilst others again breathed gently as does an infant in its cradle. Some were open-mouthed, others slumbered

with knitted brow and compressed lip; the features of some remained at rest, whilst those of others were occasionally distorted with pain, convulsed with passion, or agitated by some troublesome episode in a dream. Here a countenance bespoke grief, there disappointment; the faces of most, however, being lined with premature anxieties and care. Sometimes, as the train violently oscillated, the different heads would jerk about as if they were being thrown at each other, or were going right out through the windows. Every now and then a sleeper, half choked with his quid, would start up with convulsive cough, clench his teeth on the offending tobacco, and relapse into slumber. After a while the scene became oppressive to me; I was then the only one awake, and felt, as I glanced at the different faces around me, as if I was taking an unfair advantage of their unconscious owners, and surreptitiously possessing myself of their secrets. Besides, the company of sleepers is a powerful opiate, nor was I long in feeling its influence, which, aided by the hot stifling air within the car, soon numbered me amongst them. I recollect dreaming that I had, through great interest, been appointed to the cookship in chief of the Reform Club; and that my first business, as the successor of the immortal Soyer, was personally to turn the spit before the largest fire in his well-regulated Pandemonium. I awoke in an agony of perspiration, and found the stove, which was within three feet of me, red-hot. I could bear this species of torture no longer, and, determined to run all risks, immediately sought refuge in the fresh air.

It was a beautiful starlight night, the deep blue of the sky looking almost black in contrast with the

snow which lay thick upon the ground. The train whisked over the face of the country like a huge over-ponderous rocket, the wood-fire of the engine throwing up a shower of sparks which spread into a broad golden wake behind us. On the platform of the adjoining car I found a fellow-traveller, who, like myself, had sought refuge from the heat. Our mutual sympathy for fresh air soon led us into conversation, during which I inquired of him as to the general character and social position of those who journeyed along with us.

"Well," said he, "you see, as to position, they are much of a muchness; but some do one thing, and some another; some are farmers, who have been to Bosting to sell shoes—some are merchants from the west, who have also been to that ere city for winter stock—some do nothin' that nobody knows on, but manage to make a gentlemanly livin' on it: and some are spekelators, who have been to the east to do a stroke of business; I'm a spekelator myself, but none of your dubitatious sort; I've lots for sale in Milwaukie, and Chicago—if you do any thing in that line, stranger, I'm your man."

Having assured him that I had no intention of becoming a landed proprietor on Lake Michigan, or elsewhere, I begged him to explain that portion of his harangue which connected farmers with dealings in shoes. I had heard much of the fertility of the American soil, but was not aware that such articles ranked amongst its products.

"Why, our people," said he, "can turn their hand a'most to any thing, from whippin' the universe to stuffin' a mosquito. These 'ere New England farmers, you see, farm it in the summer time, but their

poor sile givin' them nothin' to do in the winter, they take to it in-doors, and work for months at the last. They sell their shoes in Bosting for home consumption, and to send to Europe, Chainy, and South Ameriky."

I had scarcely received this piece of information, as to the winter occupation of New England farmers, when we suddenly came to a halt, under a sort of shed, which I was informed was the Norwich station. We were still eight miles from Alleyn's Point, where we were to take the steamer, and were soon informed by the conductor that we must stop at Norwich until news of her arrival should reach us. I could not exactly see the advantage of stopping for such a purpose—eight miles from the coast—but was obliged to swallow my disappointment. The truth was, that the Sound was so obstructed with ice, that, for the last two days, no steamer had ventured down from New York; and it was on the mere chance of finding one that night to take us up to town, that we were trundled off from Boston.

As we might be detained till morning, we all scrambled to the nearest hotels to secure sleeping quarters for the night. Alas! not only was every hotel full to overflowing, but there was not, in the whole town, a spare bed to be had for love or money. The passengers by the trains of the two previous days were still close prisoners in Norwich, as were also those who had arrived during the same period to proceed by the Long Island railway. Here, then, were upwards of a thousand persons suddenly added to the population of a small town, creating a demand for pillows and mattresses, for which the supply was anything but adequate.

After a patient but unsuccessful search for a bed, I returned to the hotel nearest the station, where I found most of my fellow-unfortunates in noisy assemblage convened, venting their imprecations against the railway company, whom they held responsible for all the annoyances of the journey. Everybody was sure that everybody had an action at law against the directors; and if everybody had been anybody else but himself, he would have had no hesitation in testing the point.

It was fortunate for us that the hotel was not unprovided with edibles. Whilst supper was being prepared, we were huddled into a small apartment, which did duty as an ante-chamber to a room behind it, fitted up as a bar-room, in which the more noisy of the company had congregated, discussing gin sling and politics, and the prospects more immediately before them. When supper was announced, the race for seats was appalling. Being near the door I was pushed in without any effort of my own, and was amongst the first to be accommodated with a seat. There was plenty enough for the most craving appetites, and sufficient variety to meet any conceivable eccentricity of taste. The bacon and ham were good; but ludicrous in the extreme were the attempts at chop, and the faint imitations of steak. There were several varieties of fish, including oysters, which latter were boiled into a sort of black broth; there were innumerable sweets and sweetmeats, fowl in every mode of preparation, very white bread and very black bread, Indian corn prepared in half-a-dozen different ways, with tea and coffee, beer, and every variety of spirituous liquor. We were all very hungry, and for some minutes forgot our annoyances in appeasing our

appetites, the episode winding up by each man paying half a dollar to a sallow looking sentry in yellow shirt-sleeves, who stood at the door to receive it.

Such as were so inclined now disposed of themselves for sleep. The ponderous but very comfortable arm-chairs, which invariably form the chief feature in the garniture of an American tap-room, were immediately appropriated, as were also the chairs and tables in the adjoining rooms. Some laid themselves down upon the floor, with billets of wood for their pillows. I had luckily been able to seize upon a chair, and sat for some time musing upon the strangeness of my position. On my left sat a large burly man, about forty, in the attire of a farmer, and who, like myself, seemed indisposed to slumber. He chewed with unusual vehemence; and my attention was first attracted to him by the unerring certainty with which he expectorated over one of them, into a spittoon, which lay between two sleepers on the floor. He occasionally varied his amusement by directing his filthy distillations against the stove, from the hot side of which they sometimes glanced with the report of a pistol. By and bye we got into conversation, when I discovered that he was from the Granite State, as New Hampshire is called, and that he was on his way to Oregon, *via* New York and Cape Horn, a distance of 15,000 miles, but of which he seemed to make very light. His only trouble was, that he would be too late for the ship, which was to sail on the following day. I observed, that in that case his disappointment must be very great, inasmuch as many weeks must elapse ere a similar opportunity again presented itself to him. He assured me that it would be very trifling, for he had

made up his mind, since he had supped, should he miss the ship, to "go west" to "Illinois State." I was astonished at the facility and apparent indifference with which he abandoned the one purpose for the other. But it is this flexibility of character that is at the very foundation of American enterprise. Let your genuine Yankee find one path impracticable, and he turns directly into another, in pursuing which he never permits his energies to be crippled by futile lamentations over past disappointments.

About five in the morning we were once more put in motion by the welcome intelligence that a steamer had arrived, and was in waiting for us at Alleyn's Point. We embarked about seven o'clock some miles above the mouth of the River Thames. The morning was bright and cold, and we had a keen cutting breeze in our faces as we dropped down towards the Sound. We stopped for some minutes to take in passengers at New London, one of the seaport towns of Connecticut, very prettily situated on the right bank of the river, close to its junction with the Sound. On the opposite bank is a tall obelisk, raised to the memory of some Americans, who are said to have been treacherously massacred, during the revolutionary war, by a troop of British soldiers. Whilst looking at this, two men, who were on deck, advanced and stopped within a pace or two of me. The elder, and spokesman of the two, was about forty-five years of age, and was dressed in a long overcoat, which was unbuttoned, and hung very slovenly down to his heels. He stooped, not at the shoulders, but from the stomach; whilst his sallow face was furrowed like a newly ploughed field. His lips were thin to a degree, his mouth being marked but by a sharp short line; and when he

looked at you, it was with nervous and uneasy glances, furtively shot from beneath a pair of shaggy half-grey eyebrows. His expression was malignant, his *tout ensemble* repulsive. I instinctively turned away from him, but it seems I was not to escape, for, having brought me, as he thought, within hearing distance, he muttered *to* his companion, but evidently *at* me—"Yes, there's a moniment raised to the eternal shame of the bloody Britishers; but we'll take the change out of them for that yet, or Colonel Polk's not my man, by G—d!" I looked at him, mechanically, as he uttered these words. He stood between me and his companion, as motionless as a statue, his eye, which turned neither to the right nor to the left, apparently fixed on the distant shore of Long Island, but with ears erect, in evident expectation of some rejoinder to this flattering harangue. Deeming it more prudent to make none, I turned away and paced the deck, which I had the satisfaction of perceiving caused him no little disappointment. He was one of the few in the seaboard and commercial States, who had been seized with the Oregon mania; and so powerfully did the poison operate upon him, that it was with difficulty he could keep from biting.

On leaving New London, a few minutes sufficed to bring us to the Sound, the shore of Long Island being dimly visible to the southward. Its waters were then smooth and glassy: but, sheltered and land-locked though it be, the Sound is sometimes the scene of the most terrific and disastrous tempests. Our steamer was not one of the floating palaces which usually ply on these waters; and, being neither more nor less than the ferry-boat connecting Long Island with the mainland, presented us with

none of the accommodations generally found on this route. A more unshaven looking crew, therefore, than sat down to breakfast, can hardly be imagined. The majority of beards were of thirty-six hours' growth; and it was amusing to witness the degree to which each had taken advantage of its accidental immunity. Some merely peered through the skin, others were wildly luxuriant. Some were light, some dark, some utterly black, some red, some sandy, and some had a smack of blue in them. The ladies, who had come aboard at New London, kept as shy of us as if we had escaped from Worcester.

After breakfast I seated myself by the stove and commenced reading, but had been thus engaged only a few minutes, when I was accosted by a stout short elderly gentleman, dressed in snuff-coloured cloth from head to foot, who made me his confidant so far as to inform me, that we had been very lucky in getting a boat. Having nothing to object to so obvious a proposition, I categorically assented, in the hope of being able to resume my book. But in this I was disappointed, for he was soon joined by a middle-aged man, with a very self-sufficient expression, who asked me—

"Didn't our Prez'dent's message put the old Lion's back up?"

The steamer by which I had arrived being the first that had left Liverpool after the receipt in England of the President's warlike message, the most intense interest was manifested on all hands to know the effect which it had produced in Europe. I, therefore, replied—"Considerably."

"We expected it would rile him a bit—rayther—we did;" added he.

"Didn't it frighten him a leetle?" asked the gentleman in snuff-colour.

"As an Englishman, I would fain be spared the humiliating confession," replied I; "particularly as the whole will be published in the papers, in the course of a few hours."

This, as I expected, only made them the more curious. The first speaker returned to the charge, urging me to let them know what had taken place, and advising me, at the same time, that I might consider myself amongst friends; and that the Americans were not a "crowin' people."

"Well, gentlemen," said I; "if you can sympathise with a fallen enemy, I have no objection to speak plainly with you." They shook their heads affirmatively, and showed, by drawing closer to, that they really meant kindly towards, me.

"The publication of the Message," I continued, "was all that was necessary to shake to its foundation the European settlement of 1815. Prince Metternich immediately dismissed Reis Effendi across the Balkan. M. Guizot notified Abd-el-Kader that the triple alliance was at an end; whilst England, in alarm, threw herself into the hands of Russia, entering into an alliance offensive and defensive with that power; and, as a guarantee of good faith, giving up the temporary possession of Tilbury Fort to the Autocrat, whose troops now garrison the key of the Thames."

"Is that the way the British Lion took the lash of 'Young Hickory?'" asked the first speaker; "Well, I swan—"

"He needn't have been scared in such a hurry, neither," said the gentleman in snuff-colour; "for maybe we didn't mean it, after all."

"The Lion must have been considerably scared," added I, "thus to seek protection from the Bear."

Both gentlemen hereupon looked at each other, pressed their lips, shook their heads, and unbuttoned their coats, that they might breathe the more freely; and, after regarding me for some time with an air of evident compassion, turned suddenly round, and gr - ciously left me to my own reflections. They were soon the centre of a group of eager listeners, to whom they detailed the important news which they had just heard.

"Well, I declare!" I overheard the snuff-coloured gentleman say, "but we air a greater people than I thought for!"

"I know'd it," said a long Yankee from Maine; "we're born to whip universal nature. The Eurōpeans can't hold a candle to us already, e'en a'most "——

"We have certainly," continued the snuff-coloured gentleman, thoughtfully, "done what Napoleon himself couldn't do. We have introduced foreign troops into England. The mere wag of our President's tongue has garrisoned her greatest fort with Cossacks and Rooshians."

Such of my American fellow-voyagers by the "Hibernia" as overheard the convers tion enjoyed it greatly, as indeed did most of those who were within reach of our voice, who were amused at the gullibility of the two elderly gentlemen.

The truth is, that the more belligerent of the American people imagined that the President's message was sure to set the old world in a flame, and were mortified beyond measure on ascertaining the little impression which it had really produced.

As we approached the city, the Sound gradually

narrowed, and when near Herl Gate, a straitened passage through which the water rushes at some periods of the tide with a velocity which renders its navigation rather hazardous, we became fairly imbedded in ice, which, broken into masses of various sizes, completely covered the surface of the water, and through which it was with extreme difficulty that we made our way. Mass after mass grated along the sides of the boat, and then went—crunch—crunch—under the lusty paddle-wheels, coming up, broken in piecemeal, in our wake. It was long dark ere we reached the city. Light after light first appeared upon our right, then on our left, then before, and finally all around us, as we became gradually environed by the city and its insular suburbs. It was with difficulty we groped our way alongside one of the crowded wharves. The long terraces of shops and warehouses, which skirted the harbour, presented one continuous blaze of light; and from the multitude of figures which flitted rapidly to and fro, it would have been evident, had other tokens been wanting, that we were about to land in a great and bustling city. Eight o'clock was tolling from the nearest steeple as I stepped ashore; and immediately, from spire to spire, on all sides, the hour rang merrily through the keen night air. I jumped into a sleigh, and, in less than an hour's time, was oblivious of all my fatigues in a comfortable room in the second story of the Astor House.

CHAPTER IV.

NEW YORK, ITS SITUATION AND ENVIRONS.

Position of the City.—Its great Commercial Advantages.—Bird's-eye View of its Situation and Environs.—Description of the City.—The Battery.—Broadway.—Fires in New York.—The Park.—Hotels.—Theatres—Tammany Hall.—The City Hall.—The Five Points.—Plan of the Future City.—Pigs and their Immunities.—The Port (East River Side).—Brooklyn.—The Old City.—Wall-street.—The Merchants' Exchange.—The Custom-house.—Trinity Church.—The Port on the Hudson.—Steamers.—Small Craft.—The Quays.—The Great Aqueduct.—Gaiety of New York.—Churches.—Its Political Influence.—Banks, &c.—Growth of the City.—Its Destiny.

BEFORE proceeding to describe the city itself, it may not be amiss first to give a brief sketch of its situation and environs.

Situated on the Atlantic, New York is completely sheltered from its turbulence by a group of intervening islands, which screen the ocean from its view. Its only water prospect is that afforded to it by the noble bay into which it projects. Nothing can surpass the security of its position, or the safety and practicability of its approaches. It stands, the insulated centre of a spacious and varied panorama; the objects which contribute, by their combination, to render its position exquisitely picturesque, also serving, in a double sense, as a security to it, inasmuch as they protect it from the turbulence of the ocean, and defend it from the attacks of a hostile power.

Thus, in beautifying and enriching its prospect, nature has sacrificed nothing essential to its position as a great maritime town.

The Hudson river, after running a lengthened course, due north and south, expands, about forty miles above its embouchure, into a spacious estuary, designated by the Dutch colonists the Tappan Zee. The western or New Jersey shore of this estuary, after running a considerable distance further to the south than the opposite bank, takes a long sweep to the eastward, terminating in the heights of Neversink, on the Atlantic. The east or New York bank runs parallel with the other, until it abruptly terminates at the Battery, which is the most southerly point of the city. Here the river and Atlantic would immediately unite, but for the intervention of the islands already alluded to, which, from their position, form a spacious bay, into which the estuary merges. This bay is formed partly by the coast of New Jersey on the west; partly by Staten Island, which lies between the city and that portion of the New Jersey coast already described as stretching to the eastward; and partly by the western extremity of Long Island, which is separated from the town by a ferry scarcely so wide as that between Liverpool and Birkenhead. Towards the south-east, and between Long Island and Staten Island, are the Narrows, the principal passage to and from the ocean; but the one island slightly overlapping the other, the Atlantic, which is from fifteen to twenty miles distant, is not seen from the city. New York stands upon a long projecting tongue of land, running southward into the bay, having the estuary of the Hudson, with the opposite coast of New Jersey, on the west; the narrow channel, called

the East River, separating it from Long Island, on the east; and the spacious expanse of the bay, with the undulating shore of Staten Island, on the south. This tongue of land, which is of the average width of about two miles, is, in reality, an island; a short narrow strait, called the Harlaem river, uniting the Hudson with the East River, and thus separating it from the mainland about thirteen miles above its most southerly point—the Battery. Independently of the Harlaem river, which is of little or no advantage in a commercial point of view, the site on which the city stands is washed on three sides by water, deep and navigable to the very shore. The bulk of the city occupies the southern extremity of the island, where its foundations were first laid, that being the point nearest to the Atlantic, and the centre of the bay. It is now densely built from side to side of the island, that is to say, from the Hudson to the East River, extending northward for upwards of three miles, for the greater portion of which distance it is almost as compact as London is between Cheapside and the Thames, or Glasgow between the Trongate and the Clyde. The whole island is comprised within the limits of the city, although but one-fourth of it is yet built upon. It is already planned and laid out, however, from the Battery to the Harlaem river. That it will cover this whole distance one day, there can be no doubt. It can only expand in one direction—northward. The rapidity of its increase will be afterwards noticed. When the city covers the island, it will have a coast of twenty-six miles in length, which may be approached in all parts to the water's edge by vessels of the largest burden. Already the port extends around the city for a

distance of six miles. The foreign shipping, or that engaged in the foreign trade, as well as vessels of the largest class which make long voyages coastwise, are almost all accommodated at the quays on the East River side of the town; those which line the Hudson side being generally appropriated to inland and coasting steamers, as well as to other craft engaged in the inland and coasting trade.

The advantages of the commercial position of New York are not to be estimated in view only of the accommodation and safe harbourage which it can afford to every class of shipping. Its situation relatively to a large section of the continent is such as of necessity to constitute it one of the greatest commercial emporiums of America. By the Hudson River and the canal uniting it with Lake Champlain, it can hold a direct intercourse with Canada, and reach the great lakes in the upper country, though by a circuitous route. By the Hudson River and the Erie Canal, it is put in direct communication with the great lakes, and with the boundless and fertile grain-growing region which surrounds them, including Western New York, Canada West, and all of one and the greater portion of six other States of the Union. Once on the lakes, it is easy to descend into the valley of the Mississippi, the valley being connected in more places than one, by means of canals, both with the lakes and the Erie Canal. It has also a route to the Mississippi by the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Canals. With the exception of the great valley itself, the region which is and will continue to be chiefly, if not mainly, dependent upon New York for its supplies, will be, as it now is, the most populous in the Union; and, as will be after-

wards shown, it will yet share greatly with the other Atlantic cities and New Orleans the trade of the vast districts which border the Upper Mississippi and its tributaries. With a harbour spacious, accessible, and convenient, and fully equal, in every respect, to all the exigencies, present and future, of so commanding a commercial position, both as regards foreign and inland trade, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, although in themselves great trading communities, must ever stand in the relation more of auxiliaries than of rivals to it as maritime towns.

But to appreciate aright the position of the city, together with its environs, continental and insular, it is advisable to seek some commanding point of view, from which the whole may be observed at a glance. If the reader will accompany me, I shall lead him to such a point.

Staten Island, as I have already observed, forms the southern boundary of the bay, the portion of it lying between the island and the city being from four to five miles in width. Its outline, which is bold and undulating, rises, at some points, to a considerable elevation; its sheltered and well-wooded slopes, which are generally deeply immersed in shade, from their northern exposure, forming, during the fierce heats of summer, a most refreshing feature in the prospect commanded from the town. Along the shore, and nestled, as it were, at the feet of the uplands, you can discern, on looking from the Battery, several prettily-situated towns and hamlets, which seem almost to dip into the waters of the bay, whilst their gay white walls present a pleasing contrast to the dark-green foliage around and overhanging them. There are isolated villas too, scattered along the

water-side, and embosomed, at different elevations, amid the luxuriant vegetation of the shady slopes which swell upward from the shore. The towns are watering places, to which families from the hot dusty city retreat, that they may enjoy the renovating luxuries of sea bathing; the villas are the country mansions of the wealthier of the citizens, who can afford to withdraw, during the summer season, from the sickening heats of the town. Far up above them all, on the topmost height visible to you, and embosomed amid the majestic remnants of the native forest, is the hospitable mansion of my warm, frank, and generous friend Mr. W——. Thither, therefore, let us hie; I promise you, first, a friendly reception, and, next, a magnificent prospect.

As it was summer when I first visited the spot, the reader must suppose that it is summer when he accompanies me.

We proceed by the Staten Island ferry-boat, which starts from Whitehall, near the Battery. Our landing place on the island is New Brighton, about six miles from town, and whither a sail of about half-an-hour will convey us. It is evening, and the steamboat is crowded with passengers, most of those on board being merchants and traders on their way home for the night. They are either standing or walking about in groups, on the promenade-deck and between decks, and talking eagerly upon matters connected with business or politics. Here and there, beneath the seats, you can see numbers of covered baskets, generally filled with such luxuries of the season as can be most readily procured in town. Some whole families have been in town for the day, and are now returning, in the cool of the evening, to their refresh-

ing retreats, amid the trees, or by the water-side. Several children are gambolling upon deck, dressed in the coolest attire, and their whole bodies protected from the sun by broad straw hats, the rims of which sway up and down, like the wings of a large bird, with every movement which they make. Their youthful but languid-looking mothers are carefully watching them all the while, and snatch them nervously back, whenever, in their waywardness, they approach too near the slender cord taffrail, which is all that intervenes between them and the water. There is a fine fresh breeze on the bay, of which several outward-bound ships are taking advantage, to make a good offing for the night. Steamers are in sight, crossing and re-crossing all the ferries, whilst yachts and tiny craft of all kinds are skipping merrily over the lively waters. We land on a strong wooden pier, flanked by some straggling houses, mostly built of wood, and painted white as snow. We get into a hackney coach, which slowly jolts us up a steep and rugged ascent, whence we diverge into a pleasant winding road, cut but recently through the forest. Pursuing this for a short distance, a spacious and well-kept lawn, after the true English model, suddenly bursts upon us, at the top of which is our haven for the night. But, before we enter, let me draw your attention to that glorious sunset, lighting up the western heavens, as if by a mighty conflagration, and throwing a broad pathway of vermilion across the tremulous bay.

The house is large, and somewhat fantastic in its architecture, but otherwise well suited, in all respects, to the tranquil retreat in the midst of which it stands. The hall door is open to enable it to

inhale the cool evening breeze. The hall itself is spacious, and so fashioned as to remind one of the description of a Roman villa. We are led by a servant to one of the many doors which open from it, and hear the ivory balls rattling as we approach. Mr. W—— is already at home, and in the billiard-room with some friends who have accompanied him from the city. Here he is, young and sprightly, his countenance beaming with intelligence and good humour. Let me introduce you.

As it is now too late to look at the prospect, we dine, and afterwards pass a most pleasant evening, our kind host being abundantly successful in his endeavours to entertain us, whilst his charming young wife and stately mother-in-law impart grace and vivacity to our circle. But, as we have to be up betimes in the morning, we separate with an early good-night.

Early morning, and here we are, after a refreshing sleep, in the observatory on the top of the house. The prospect below and around us is gorgeous beyond all that the imagination can conceive, and both the tongue and the pen fail in attempting to describe it.

On looking around, you find yourself on a commanding elevation, in the centre of a vast and varied panorama. But to comprehend the prospect in its magnificent aggregate, it is necessary that you should observe it in detail.

To the eastward, then, which we may select as a starting point, you have the broad and buoyant Atlantic, rolling in towards the land before a fresh sea-breeze. The sun has just risen above the restless horizon, and its oblique rays are tinging the wave tops with a

golden lustre. Scores of vessels are in sight, some near enough to enable you to distinguish their rig, and others far distant, looking like so many specks upon the horizon. The approach to the bay is flanked far out to sea, on the south, by Sandyhook and the heights of Neversink in New Jersey; and on the north, by the wavy coast of Long Island, which comes sweeping in almost to your feet. Far down that coast you can distinguish, against the dark-green background, a cluster of white houses, on the windows of which the sunlight now glistens, as if it were reflected from so many topazes. This is Rockaway, a favourite watering-place, situated in the bight of a semicircular bay, which opens direct upon the Atlantic. Withdrawing your gaze from the distance, your eye rests, amongst the objects which seem to be more immediately beneath your feet, upon the channel called the Narrows, forming the main entrance to the harbour, and consisting of a narrow strait, between the confronting shores of Long Island and Staten Island. It is a few miles in length, whilst its practicable channel for shipping is, at some points, very narrow. At the point at which the two islands approach nearest to each other, you perceive it flanked by two strong forts, each mounting several tiers of guns, and so close to each other that either could apparently play with effect into the other. They might serve as a good defence against a sailing fleet, but their efficiency against a steam squadron, with line-of-battle ships in tow, would be very doubtful. On both sides of the strait you see villas and farm houses, with their white sides glittering in the morning sun-light, and the water in the channel now glowing beneath them like a tremulous mass of gold. Such is

the great gateway to New York from the "highway of nations." As already seen, the city can also be approached by the Sound, which separates the northern coast of Long Island from the State of Connecticut; as it also can by Raritan Bay, between Staten Island and the main land to the south of it, and the long, narrow, and devious channel known as Staten Island Sound. All these approaches are fortified. From the height, at which you now survey the Narrows, the main entrance to the habour seems to lie at your feet. You can look down upon the very decks of the vessels that are now scudding gaily in before the east wind, which, however, is becoming fainter and fainter, as the sun mounts towards the zenith. What huge floating object is that just opening the point on which one of the forts is situated? It is soon evident that she is a steamer advancing at a rapid pace towards the city. Her outline seems familiar to me, and her dimensions suggest that she is a Transatlantic vessel. A look through the glass satisfies me that she is the "Great Western," once the favourite both of Europe and America. It is an exciting moment for the passengers, all of whom appear to be upon deck, some fondly recognising familiar objects, and others gazing, for the first time, upon the landscapes of the New World. You can distinguish these two classes of passengers by their looks and gestures. Captain Matthews, one of the most affable, vigilant, and trustworthy sailors that ever commanded a ship, is on the look-out with the pilot, on the larboard paddle-box.

But let us now, carrying the eye across a portion of Long Island, turn a little to the left, and almost due north, we have the city and its principal

suburb, Brooklyn, before us. They lie about six miles off; but in the clear crisp morning air, and seen over the gleaming waters of the bay, they scarcely seem to be half that distance. That small island lying between us and the city is Governor's Island, on which there is a circular fort of massive brickwork, which, from the proximity of the island to the town, almost merges, when viewed from this spot, into the huge red mass of buildings behind it. This fort seems much more capable of doing mischief than of rendering any very great service to the town. Viewed from this point, New York and Brooklyn stand out in bold relief from every other feature in the scene. The channel of the East River, separating the city from its Long Island suburb, is so narrow and winding, that, seen from this distance, they appear to blend into one, and indeed, but for the forest of masts and rigging, which line for miles the eastern side of the city, and which now seem to mingle with the houses, you would not be aware that there was a strait between them. The whole picture is striking in the extreme. In the immediate foreground you have the wooded slopes of Staten Island, darting precipitately down from your very feet to the water's edge; next comes the wide expanse of the noble bay, beyond which rises in mid-distance, a huge mass of ruddy brickwork, which the eye can easily resolve into all the outlines of a great city; whilst far beyond, and forming an appropriate back-ground to the whole, are the uplands of Westchester, fading, to the eastward, into the dim and distant coast of Connecticut. From the dense mass of human habitations before you, rise innumerable spires and cupolas, from the small, white, trim, wooden steeple in the suburb, to the

beautiful and stately spire which towers, for some hundreds of feet, over Trinity church. On the spot on which your eye now rests, four hundred thousand human beings are already awake and astir, as is evident from the thin pale smoke which begins to sully, but in that direction only, the clear blue sky. Hark! the shrill tone of a bell comes ringing up to us over the tree tops. A few minutes more, and the first ferry-boat for the day leaves the island for the city. On she speeds gallantly, lashing the water into foam behind her; crowds of passengers pacing her decks, most of whom have already breakfasted, and are ready for business. You perceive, too, against the mass of houses in the city, columns of white steam, shot up suddenly here and there from escape pipes, their hissing sound by and by stealing faintly to your ear across the waters of the bay. These are from the boats plying upon the other ferries, and from ocean and inland steamers preparing for departure, north, east, and south. You have scarcely noticed all this, when from the New Jersey shore of the Hudson comes the shrill whistle of the locomotive, indicating that the communication is about to open for the day between New York and Philadelphia. That is no echo to it, which immediately follows it from Long Island, on the opposite flank of the city; for, if you listen, you can hear the rapid panting of the engine as it drags the heavily laden train over one of the lines of communication between the city and New England. New York is now beginning fairly to pour forth its daily life, and craft of all kinds are emerging from beneath its shadow, amongst which it is not difficult to distinguish the adventurous and fast-sailing pilot-boat, making, almost

in the wind's eye, towards the Narrows, for the Atlantic.

It is when you direct your gaze a little to the left of the city that you become fully aware, in addition to its maritime superiority, of the excellence of its position, as regards inland trade. The view in that direction stretches far up the estuary of the Hudson, the broad highway to the far west, and is terminated by a faint line of blue hills, known as the highlands of the Hudson, and through which it forces its way, by a narrow and romantic channel, to the Tappan Zee. It is on this magnificent basin that the western side of the city reposes. On its eastern side, the trade of the East is concentrated; on the other, the traffic of the West is poured. It thus immediately connects the foreign world with the vast and far interior. For a great *entrepôt* of trade, then, there is, perhaps, but one other position which excels it, and that will be afterwards considered. The produce of the world is accessible to it from the ocean; whilst its facilities, natural and artificial, for communication with the interior, enable it to distribute that produce through a thousand different channels, at the same time that it is the point on which the productions of the interior are mainly accumulated for shipment.

Turning still to the left, you have, on the opposite side of the estuary, the undulating landscapes of New Jersey, with the pretty rural retreat of Hoboken in the foreground. About due west, is Jersey city, in reality another suburb of New York, and being the starting point for Philadelphia and the South. On the low projecting point on which it stands, it forms, with its modest and solitary spire, a not uninteresting feature in the scene. Almost in a line between you

and it, is another small island, crested with a fort. The ferry-boats are now plying every ten minutes between the two shores. A little to the south, and far in the interior, is the city of Newark, in the same State—a large and handsome town, but looking from this distance like a cluster of white objects accidentally dropped upon the hill-side. On looking more closely, you will observe that it stands not far from the head of a large, shallow bay. Between us and this bay is a cluster of beautifully wooded slopes, separated from us by Staten Island Sound.

Carrying your sweep of vision still further to the south, an extensive inland view of New Jersey opens up to you, the foreground being occupied by the islands just referred to, and between which and Staten Island, you can here and there trace the romantic windings of the narrow sound, to which the latter has given its name. I have approached the city through this channel from Amboy, on the mainland, when there was not a breath of air to ruffle the surface of the water, when the bay looked like a huge mass of quiescent quicksilver, when town, hill, rock, and wood, seemed afloat upon its surface, and when all wore that luscious and dreamy look, which characterizes a fancy sketch from fairy-land. Small villages are scattered in profusion along the course of the Sound; and the rich greenery, in which the islands are enveloped, is speckled, here and there, with sturdy farm houses and inviting rural retreats.

In turning further to the left, till you look due south, you see where the New Jersey shore takes the sudden sweep to the eastward, which carries it, back of Staten Island, to the Atlantic. The country here is beautifully cultivated and uneven, and its outline

is marked by a succession of graceful undulations. This portion of the mainland is almost entirely screened by Staten Island from the city, the broad expanse of Raritan Bay intervening between the island and the mainland. Looking once more to the eastward, and out to seaward, the wavy land line becomes fainter and fainter, until at last, from the hazy heights of Neversink, the eye falls flagging upon the Atlantic, at the point where you commenced your survey.

You have now completed the circuit of a panorama, containing, within a diameter of from 60 to 100 miles, a greater variety and a more elaborate combination of all the elements essential to perfect landscape than, perhaps, any other prospect in the world. You have the ocean rolling almost at your feet,—you have a spacious bay, clustered with islands, and confined by a most irregular coast, two offshoots of which bay, the one a noble estuary, and the other a deep, narrow strait, encircle a great city, which they separate from its suburbs,—you have the mainland rising, near, into rich and swelling uplands, and, in the distance, into faint and hazy elevations; whilst the shore, all around you, is indented with beautiful creeks, and mantled in the richest verdure. The whole, taken together, presents a combination of land and water, hill and dale, town and shipping, island and woodland, corn-field and forest, of objects near and objects remote, of river and ocean, of bay and promontory, which for richness, variety, and imposing beauty, is not elsewhere to be seen.

But let us now descend to breakfast, for which a brief stroll through the grounds will serve as an excellent preparation. The lawn in front of the

house commands a view of Raritan Bay and the Atlantic; whilst from the back of it may be seen the bay, New York, Long Island, and a large section of New Jersey. There is not a window in the house but commands a prospect as varied as it is extensive. It is but fit that a spot, around which nature has concentrated so many of her charms, should be decorated in part with the achievements of art; and on entering a smaller lawn, at the west end of the house, and screened from that in front by a belt of trees and shrubbery, we find it ornamented with elegant groups of statuary, and presenting a happy blending of art and nature in their most exquisite features.

After breakfast, we descend to New Brighton, and proceed by ferry-boat to town. Our landing-place is Whitehall, at the point from which we started on the preceding evening. As it is now my purpose to request the reader to accompany me in a short ramble through the town, we shall proceed at once to the Battery, than which a better starting point cannot be selected.

The long tongue of land on which the city is built, converges to a point at its southern extremity. On this point, and, as it were, at the foot of the town, is the Battery. Let not the reader be deceived by the formidable sound of its name, into picturing to himself a lofty mound, crested with massive walls, perforated with embrasures, and bristling with cannon. It derives its name from a purpose to which it was once applied, but to which it is unlikely that it will ever be applied again. It is a low spot of ground, almost level with high-water mark, and defended from the encroachments of the bay by a wall but a few feet in height, on a level with the top of which is a broad gravel walk, having along

its outward side a slight open railing, which is all that protects the pedestrians, passing to and fro, from the bay. Back of this walk are plots of grass of various shapes and sizes, intersected by other walks, broad and spacious, like that which skirts the water. These promenades are all lined with magnificent trees, which form shady avenues in all directions through the grounds, which are a little more than half the size of St. James's Park. When the trees are in full leaf, the Battery has a fine effect seen from the bay, as a foreground to the town. It is a place much frequented in summer evenings by the New Yorkers, who are attracted to it not only by the shade which its foliage affords them, but also by the fresh breezes which generally play along its avenues from the bay. It is not now, however, a place of fashionable resort, which is, perhaps, chiefly to be attributed to its distance from the fashionable quarters of the city, which lie to the northward. A more delicious retreat can scarcely be imagined than the Battery on a fine summer evening. In front lies the vast body of the bay, bounded by the amphitheatric sweep of the shores of Long Island, Staten Island, and New Jersey, the whole of which, with Governor's Island, and the other islets in the bay, when seen from the level of the water, and lighted up by the glow of an American sunset, presents a picture which may be more easily conceived than described. When any exciting occasion calls the New Yorkers in multitudes into it, the Battery exhibits a most striking scene. The "Sirius" was the first vessel that crossed from England to New York by steam. Her arrival was unexpected; the "Great Western," which followed her in the course of a few

hours, being that which was looked for as the real harbinger of a new era in Transatlantic navigation. As soon as it was rumoured that her smoke was visible in the direction of the Narrows, the whole population, as if animated by one impulse, seemed to pour down to the Battery to welcome her. In an hour afterwards she was abreast of the East River; instead of immediately ascending which to dock, she passed the Battery, turned and dashed past it again, close to shore, when she was welcomed by the huzzas of upwards of one hundred thousand people, crowded upon the terrace walk that skirted the bay. I was told by a passenger who had been an eye-witness of the scene from on board, that it was one of the most magnificent spectacles he had ever beheld.

I myself afterwards witnessed the Battery, when it was densely crowded with people. It was on a 4th of July, the great national gala-day of America. The weather was fine, and every ship in harbour was decorated with colours. The "North Carolina," a first-class American ship, was lying in the harbour, where she had been doing duty, for some time, as a guard ship. At one o'clock she fired a salute in honour of the day, and in commemoration of the important event, of which, a little more than half a century previously, it had been the witness. Lord Ashburton was then in America, engaged in negotiations with Mr. Webster, American Secretary of State, concerning the north-eastern boundary. The "Warspite" frigate, under the command of Lord John Hay, which had conveyed his lordship to New York, and was waiting to carry him back to England, was also moored in the harbour. I observed that, whilst the guns of the "North Carolina" were one after another

being discharged, speculation was rife amongst the crowd as to what the "Warspite" would do, which lay at some distance from the shore, with colours flying, but with no signs of life on board. The salute from the "North Carolina" being finished, a pause of a few minutes ensued, but the "Warspite" remained silent.

"The Britisher's out of gunpowder," said, at length, one near me in the crowd.

He had scarcely uttered the words, when a flash momentarily gleamed from the side of the frigate, followed by a wreathing cloud of smoke, and in a few seconds afterwards, the boom of a heavy gun struck with painful force upon the ear, reverberated through all the avenues of the Battery, and shook the windows in the houses which overlooked it. The contrast between the heavy metal which it indicated, and the guns on board the "North Carolina," was too striking not to be noticed by the crowd, who looked at each other with surprise, mingled with some mortification. As the "Warspite" continued to thunder forth her salute, she made popguns of the metal on board the "North Carolina." It is but just, however, to say, that the latter had not then her sailing armament on board; an American ship, in general, when fully equipped, carrying heavier metal than a British one. I could not help observing, however, that many were very causelessly annoyed, by one of their own first-class ships being outdone, on such an occasion, by a second-class ship in the British service. But, as time passes, let us leave the Battery for the town.

Passing through one of the iron gates which separate it from the streets, we find ourselves at once in Broadway. This is the great artery of New York,

commencing at the Battery, and passing in a straight line along the whole length of the city, as far north as it is yet built, and lying about midway between the Hudson and the East River. It is a noble thoroughfare, and serves at once as the Regent-street and the Strand of New York; being a promenade for loungers, and a great highway for the business of the city. Like most strangers, you are disappointed at its width, which does not exceed that of the Strand at the Golden Cross, whilst its name suggests very different proportions in this respect. You have not proceeded many yards, ere you come to a small open space, called the Bowling-green, there being now but very little accord between its appearance and its name. Until within a few years, it consisted of a small circular patch of grass, surrounded by a high iron railing, the tops of the different bars of which were all broken off; it being with no little satisfaction that a New Yorker informed you that they were thrown by the revolutionary cannon against the adherents of George the Third. It is now converted into a tank, from the midst of which rises an artificial rock, made to look as natural as possible, and from which, at different points, water is spouting in abundance by a multitude of jets. The effect is exceedingly good. Proceeding northward, Broadway rises from this point by a gentle ascent for nearly half a mile. The terraces of houses on both sides are both elegant and lofty, some being built of red brick, and others of grey granite from Massachusetts. About half way up this ascent, a large gap appears on the right, left by the devastating fire of the previous year. A great portion of the area over which the fire extended is already rebuilt, but

there is still enough left in ruin to indicate the extent of the catastrophe. A year hence, however, and the stranger would not know that it had ever occurred. The New Yorkers have been warned by terrible experience of the necessity of constructing their houses on a more fire-proof plan, nor have the lessons which they have received been altogether without effect upon them. They have now a better supply of water than formerly for the extinction of fire. During the great fire, which occurred about 1834, and levelled from 500 to 1,000 houses, in the most business quarter of the town, the firemen, who were numerous and well-disciplined, were quite exhausted by the time the fire was subdued; and had it not been for the timely arrival of the Philadelphia firemen with their engines, who acted, on the occasion, the part allotted to the Prussians at Waterloo, the devouring element might again have made headway and laid half the city in ashes. Between the Battery and the point where the last great fire occurred, Broadway is generally occupied by private residences. As you ascend, however, from this point, business makes itself more and more manifest, until you are at length as much in the midst of it as if standing in Cheapside.

You do not proceed very far ere you pass Trinity Church, of which more by-and-by. Immediately beyond this you come to the hotels, the chief of which are situated in Broadway. This one on the left is the Franklin House; and that over the way, and a little further up, is the Howard House, an enormous establishment, generally the favourite of Canadian travellers. About one or two hundred yards further on, is St. Paul's Church, on the left, with its

dark sombre portico, and its graceful spire. There is a burial-ground behind it, in which many of the revolutionary heroes are interred. By the time you reach this point you perceive that Broadway occupies the highest ground on the island, from the manner in which the streets incline, which lead from it, on either side, to the water. Those leading off on the left, towards the Hudson, are, generally speaking, straight and continuous to the water, not only the river, but the opposite shore of New Jersey, being visible, as you look along many of them. The streets leading, on the right, towards the East River, and into the chief seat of business in the town, are both narrow and crooked, the view along them being bounded, not by flood and field, but by piles of intervening brickwork. The descent of the land on either side from Broadway admirably adapts the site of the city to the purposes of sewerage.

Immediately on passing St. Paul's Church, you abut upon the Park, a triangular space, covered with grass, and ornamented with groups of trees. Its apex is towards you, as you approach it from the Battery, Broadway continuing its straight course along its left or western side, whilst another thoroughfare strikes off at an acute angle to the right, which after proceeding for some distance, merges into another great street, called the Bowery, which runs parallel to Broadway, and which has been aptly called by Mr. Buckingham the Holborn of New York. The Park, which is about the size of Kennington-common, is, as an open space, of the utmost value to New York. The island being narrow, the ground near its southern point was too valuable to be laid out into public pleasure-grounds.

The consequence is that, with the exception of St. John's-square, a small open space about the size of Burton-crescent, between it and the Hudson, the Park is the only open ground within the more densely built portion of the city. In the newer parts of the city to the northward, more attention is being paid to public health and recreation; Washington-square, which leads off Broadway to the left, and Union-square, which will yet form part of its line, being equal, and, indeed, the latter superior in size, to any of our London squares.

Immediately on entering the Park you have the A stor House on your left, on the line of Broadway. To get a proper view of this enormous granite pile, you must cross to the opposite side of the open space in front of it. Its chief elevation is on Broadway, its two sides forming parts of two parallel streets, leading from the main thoroughfare towards the Hudson. The basement story is low, and is occupied by a series of superb shops, the whole of the upper portion of the building, which is on a gigantic and palatial scale, being appropriated to the purposes of an hotel. A broad flight of granite steps leads to an enormous recess in the wall, flanked by huge pillars, and surmounted by a pediment, at the bottom of which recess is the main entrance, approached by another flight of steps. Once within this, a double flight of marble steps leads to an enormous hall, with a tesselated marble pavement: this hall is surrounded by sitting-rooms, and off one end of it is the great dining-room, a noble saloon, in which hundreds of guests daily sit down at the *table d'hôte*. The building is a quadrangle, enclosing an inner court, with a fountain in the midst of it. The number of bedrooms is

immense, and so complete is this mammoth establishment in all its parts, that it has its own printing press to strike off its daily bills of fare. It seems, in fact, to be a great self-subsisting establishment, doing all but growing and grinding the corn, and feeding and slaughtering the meat consumed by it. Nowhere in the world is the hotel system carried to such an extent as it is in America. Travellers almost invariably frequent the hotels, whilst many families, particularly young couples beginning life, board and lodge in them. Indeed, with the exception of Washington, where every second house is a boarding-house, it is difficult to find private lodgings in any of the American towns. There are some in the greater cities, but one must be positively directed to them to find them out. There are many establishments too, of a private character, where several families lodge together. The influence of this, and of the habit of permanently boarding at hotels, upon society, will be more fully and more appropriately considered hereafter.

Immediately beyond the Astor House is the American Hotel, small in comparison with the monster beside it, but not inferior to it in comfort. There are many others in Broadway, but those already mentioned are the principal ones.

On the other side of the Park, and directly opposite the Astor House, is the Park Theatre, the chief and the most fashionable temple of the drama in New York. The city is well supplied with theatres. Next in importance to the Park, is the Bowery Theatre, named, like the other, from its locality. They are generally well attended, but derive their chief support from strangers visiting the town, either for business or recreation.

A little beyond the Park Theatre is a building of a heavy and sombre cast, which, despite its unpromising exterior, has cut not a little figure in the world. It is Tammany Hall, the chosen rendezvous of the Loco Foco party, and where are, every now and then, celebrated the orgies of Democracy. It has recently been the scene of several tempestuous Irish demonstrations against this country. A little further up, but within the area of the Park, and about two-thirds of the way from its apex to its base, occupying a line parallel with the latter, stands the City Hall, a large and elegant building, approached by a noble flight of steps, and surmounted by a lofty cupola. Its front elevation, which is of white marble, looks down Broadway, in the direction of the Battery. —Ten chances to one that you are disturbed this very night by the bell in the cupola. From that elevation a view of the whole city is commanded, and day and night a man watches by the bell, with a hammer in his hand with which to strike it the moment he perceives any indication of fire. The number of strokes which he gives at a time indicates the ward whence the alarm proceeds. The city is divided into seventeen wards, and this arrangement directs the firemen at once to the spot where their exertions may be necessary. Numerous as are the fires in New York, the alarms of fire are still more so. I have been disturbed by as many as four in a night, and although they are sometimes groundless, they too often prove real. In front of the City Hall, and within the railings of the Park, is the finest fountain in New York. It gushes in all directions from the centre of the reservoir into which it falls, and with such force as to resolve itself into a large cloud of spray. The very music of it in

summer falls with cooling influence upon the ear. It is supplied from the Croton, forty miles off, by means which will by-and-by be alluded to.

From the Park, where it seems to attain a considerable elevation, Broadway gradually descends for some distance, after which it gently rises again, until it reaches the northern suburbs. It presents less of a business appearance beyond the Park, than between it and the Battery, and you soon come to continuous terraces of private dwellings. The streets too, leading immediately from it, on either side, are here chiefly occupied by private houses. At its lowest level, after passing the Park, a street, which goes off from it on the right, leads to the district of the town unfavourably known as the Five Points. Though by no means attractive to the stranger, it is worth a visit. Both in its moral and physical aspect, it is not unlike the Seven Dials—the latter, however, being the better, and more regularly built of the two. The site which it occupies is low, and was once marshy ground, the cheapness of the land inducing the poorer class of the inhabitants to build upon it. It is now in the very heart of the city; and a filthier or more squalid place it would not be easy to conceive. It is the common haunt of the Irish, and the negro population of the city. But let us emerge again into Broadway.

Pursuing our way towards the north, there is but little now to attract us on either side. We soon cross Canal-street, the Farringdon-street of New York, both being very wide, crossing the line of the main thoroughfares, and covering a huge sewer, which runs below. The private dwellings with which the part of Broadway beyond this is lined, are

large and roomy, although not high, and are almost all approached by a flight of steps. As we get near the top, Washington-square is to the left, one side of which is occupied by the University, a noble institution, accommodated in a noble marble pile. About three miles from the Battery, Broadway first deviates from the straight line, diverging a little to the left, as Regent-street does into Portland-place; and situated in the angle corresponding to that occupied by All Souls' church, at the head of Regent-street, is a new and beautiful Episcopal church, of the purest gothic, and decidedly one of the most elegant ecclesiastical structures in New York. A little beyond the turn, Broadway merges into Union-square, from the other side of which it again pursues its northerly course.

We have now fairly reached the northern limits of the town, which already extends for three miles up the island. From nine to ten miles of it are, therefore, as yet unbuilt upon, but its whole area, up to the Harlaem River, is even now laid out into what is destined to be future streets, avenues, and squares. When the city covers the whole, Broadway, which extends from one end of the island to the other, will be thirteen miles long. The plan of the future city, between Union-square and the Harlaem River, is one of great regularity, streets running parallel to each other, at regular distances, and extending across the island from the Hudson to the East River, and being intersected by other long streets, designated avenues, which will run in the direction of its length, and parallel to Broadway. The streets and avenues are all numbered, instead of being named in the ordinary way. This may not be very poetic, but it will be

vastly convenient. Washington, or Franklin-street may be anywhere in the town, the name not designating the position; but no one can be at a loss, understanding the plan of this part of the city, to know where Fifteenth-street, or Fourth-avenue is. These streets and avenues, of course, as yet, exist only on the chart; but those which are nearest to the town, are already partly built upon, some of the finest private residences being erected on either side of them.

It is not with the mere desire of following in the footsteps of others that, before quitting this part of the town, I direct attention to the number of vagrant pigs with which it is infested. I have seen specimens of this interesting race in Greenwich-street, not far from the Battery, but it is only when you gain the upper and more fashionable portions of the city, that they appear to be quite at home, and to have their acknowledged place on the public promenades. Sights to which we are daily accustomed, make but little impression upon us, and therefore it is that New Yorkers frequently express an honest surprise at the discoveries, in this respect, made by strangers. They are made simply because the attention of the latter is alive to everything; and if a New Yorker himself will only walk up Broadway, as far as Union-square, fancying himself, for the time being, a stranger, and ready to recognise every object that presents itself, he will find not only that noble thoroughfare, but also many of the streets that on either side lead into it, infested, to a considerable extent, by the quadrupeds in question. If, from its position, climate, or any other circumstance, it were a necessity imposed upon New York to submit to this infliction, it could not be too delicately alluded

to by a stranger; but when it is simply the result of a defect in the police regulations of the town, it becomes a legitimate subject of criticism. There is surely no constitutional maxim or principle enunciated in the declaration of independence, that requires that the freedom of the city should be indiscriminately conferred upon these animals. It would demand the infusion of but very little stringency into its police regulations, to rid a fine town of so unfavorable a feature in a *tout ensemble*, which is otherwise both attractive and imposing. Every one must admit the incongruity of the sight, such as I have seen, of a huge filthy hog devouring a putrid cabbage on a marble door-step.

But let us now hasten to the port of New York, which we shall first explore on the East River side. Turning off Broadway to the east, and descending one of the streets which lead from it in that direction, we very soon cross the broad thoroughfare of the Bowery, after which we plunge into a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets, which by-and-by lead us to the port. The East River which, as already intimated, is but a prolongation of the Sound, uniting it with the estuary of the Hudson, and dividing Long Island from New York, is deep but narrow, and flows, at some states of the tide, with a heavy current. Some distance up from the point at which we have struck it, is Blackwell's Island, forming one side of it, above which the Sound gradually expands, and turns off in a north-easterly direction, its surface being here dotted with several other islands, by the narrow and crooked channels between which vessels may find their way to its more open portions, and through them to the Atlantic. At Williamsburg, on the

opposite side of the East River, and which you can just discern some distance up, is a building yard belonging to the general government. It is, in fact, the Deptford of New York, but with this essential difference, that it does not encroach upon the accommodation required in the port for the commercial marine. The wharves which flank the city on the east side, are numerous, and mostly built of wood, projecting for a short distance into the water, not to attain a sufficiency of depth, but to form between them slips for the better accommodation of the craft that are moored to them. Where we are now, high up the port, these are of the smaller kind, consisting chiefly of sloops and schooners engaged in the coasting trade with Connecticut and the rest of New England, and of numerous barges and lighters, which are almost exclusively applied to purposes more immediately connected with the port itself. Between the wharves and the houses is a broad thoroughfare, as in Liverpool; and which, indeed, makes the circuit of the town on its water sides. As we proceed southwards, towards the Battery, it is some time ere the scene on the left undergoes any change, the wharves being all alike, and the craft in the slips differing but little in character from each other. On the right, or land side, we soon come to a succession of lime and coal yards, in the latter of which, side by side with the bituminous coal from Liverpool and Nova Scotia, may be seen the anthracite product of the rich mines of Pennsylvania. We next come to some private building-yards, with boats, barges, sloops, schooners, and steamers, in different stages of completion. In the one lowest down of all, you perceive a steamer on the stocks, no further advanced than the setting of her

timbers. She is designed to ply upon the Hudson, and, from her proportions, reminds one less of that which she is destined to become, than of the skeleton of a huge boa constrictor.

Proceeding a little further in our course, we reach a point at which the island, trending suddenly to the south-west, gradually tapers off towards the Battery. The coast of Long Island here projects almost as much as that of Manhattan Island, as that on which New York is situated is sometimes called, recedes; so that the width of the East River lying between them undergoes but little change by that which is effected in the direction of the land. It is on gaining this point, that the port of New York exhibits itself in its most imposing aspect; the city side of the East River being covered, as far as the eye can reach, with a forest of masts and rigging, as dense and tangled in appearance as a cedar swamp, whilst numerous vessels of all sizes and rigs are also to be seen, on the opposite side, moored to the wharves of Brooklyn. The broad and deep canal, intervening between the two lines of vessels, is alive with every species of floating craft, from the tiny wherry to the enormous steamer, ploughing her way to the New England coast. Take your stand here, on the end of one of the wharves, and you will confess that, looking down towards the open bay beyond, as a marine view, that of New York, from this point, can scarcely be excelled.

Following the line of the quays, we soon come to the slip in which the Atlantic steamers lie. It is now occupied by the "Great Western," just arrived, as it was occupied by the "President," before she started on her last and ill-fated voyage.

The town on our right has now entirely divested itself of everything like a suburban appearance. Massive piles of warehouses line the shores; their long and gloomy terraces, upon the one hand, confronting the shipping which becomes denser and more dense as we descend on the other. The broad quays are covered with the produce of every clime; and barrels, sacks, boxes, hampers, bales, and hogsheads, are piled in continuous ridges along the streets, which lead at right angles from the port, and which are widened where they abut upon it, for the better accommodation of business. In these great reservoirs of trade, you see crowds gathered, here and there, around one who, standing on a pile of sacks or boxes, as the case may be, is vociferating so as to be heard over all the din, and gesticulating like one rehearsing his part in a melodrama. He is an auctioneer, and is busily disposing of the surrounding goods by auction. Some of those about him, who are cautiously outbidding each other, are merchants and traders from the neighbouring counties; some are from the interior of the State, and others, again, from the far west. Occasionally, too, you may discern a knot of manufacturers eagerly inspecting the bursting bales of cotton which lie around them. Some of these are from New England, others from Western New York, but the greater number are the agents of manufacturers in England.

As you proceed further and further towards the Battery, the town encroaches more and more upon the quays, leaving the whole way, however, a practicable thoroughfare between it and the shipping. The scene is now, in point of activity and animation, beyond all description, whilst the noise is incessant

and deafening: the sailors' busy song, and the draymen's impatient ejaculation, being occasionally distinguishable amid the confused and incessant din. The vessels, which here occupy the slips, are almost all either coasters of the larger class, or engaged in the foreign trade. Passing under their bowsprits, which overhang the footway, and threaten the walls of the warehouses with invasion, you pass, one after another, the slips, where lie the different lines of packets which ply between New York and Liverpool, London, and Havre, and the splendid vessels belonging to which formed the chief medium of communication between Europe and America, before the adventurous Cunard started his unrivalled line of steamers. The extensive connexion which New York has formed with the domestic and foreign world, may be appreciated by observing the different announcements with which the quays are lined, intimating the different destinations of the vessels that are moored to them. In addition to those bound for the different ports on the coast, are scores for England, dozens for France, many for the Baltic, several for Spain and the Mediterranean, a few for the coast of Africa, numbers for India, China, and South America, and some for the South Seas, Valparaiso, and the Sandwich Islands. Here they are, about to spread over the face of the earth, to collapse again on the same spot ere many months be past, to pour upon the city the produce of every clime.

We have now Brooklyn directly opposite to us on the left, already alluded to as, in reality, a suburb of New York; if a city, with a corporation and municipal government of its own, and a population of 60,000 souls, in other words, as large as Aberdeen or Dundee,

can brook the appellation.] It has an imposing site on the western extremity of Long Island, and so near New York that you can reach it in two or three minutes by any of the numerous ferries established between them. [The ground which it occupies slopes gently up from the East River, making the great bulk of the town visible from the New York side; whilst in its immediate vicinity, and on a commanding position, may be seen terraces of stately and elegant residences, chiefly inhabited by the merchants of New York.] It transacts a good deal of business, being the chief source of supply for Long Island, which extends for 150 miles behind it. The western terminus of the Long Island railway, a link in one of the chains of communication between New York and Boston, is here. As on the New York side, the East River is deep to the shore, and the slips, which resemble in all respects those of the greater city, are well lined with vessels from ports near at hand and afar off.

The densest part of New York now intervenes on our right, between us and Broadway. It is a perfect maze of narrow crooked streets, intersecting each other at all angles, and running towards almost every point of the compass. This was the spot where the foundations of the city were first laid by the Dutch, whose notions of convenience in the laying out of a town,—and indeed the same may be said of those of most other people at the same period,—were none of the brightest. The streets were left to develop themselves in the most irregular manner, the obstructive position of a single house frequently diverting a thoroughfare several degrees from the straight and convenient line, which, otherwise, it seemed disposed to follow. Pearl-street, the chief seat of the wholesale trade of

New York, was to me both a puzzle and an amusement. I seemed to meet it everywhere, in threading my way through this mazy quarter of the town, and never, for the life of me, could follow it for many yards at a time. It always manages to elude one in spite of oneself, turning off from him when he least expects it, and crossing his path again when he has begun to think it irrecoverable. The cause of all this is explainable by its origin, which, it appears, was neither more nor less than a cow-path amongst the fields, which, in the days of the Dutch, lay behind the small settlement on the water-side. It is nearly a mile in length, commencing in the neighbourhood of Whitehall, and deflecting from the line of Broadway for some distance to the eastward, after which it pursues a circuitous course amongst the narrow lanes and streets, which characterize this portion of the town, until it loses itself in a labyrinth of them, not far from the Park. It is a continuous thoroughfare, although, from the way in which it here and there turns up in portions across the stranger's path, it seems as if it had been broken into fragments, which had been severed from each other and had not yet reunited.

We soon arrive at the spot where Wall-street, the Lombard-street of New York, like so many others leading down from Broadway, abuts upon the quays. It is, in some respects, one of the most interesting sights in New York; and as, by prolonging our walk to the Battery, we shall encounter little that is different from that already seen, the quays extending almost to the Battery, we cannot do better than here diverge and take a stroll up Wall-street. For a few hundred yards it is as broad and spacious as Oxford-

street, being flanked on either side with lofty warehouses, whilst piles of goods of all descriptions so block up the thoroughfare and side walks, that it is with difficulty you can thread your way through them. Beyond this, and where it intersects the first street running parallel to the quays, it contracts at once to less than half its width in the part immediately in contact with the harbour; and it is between this and Broadway, which you can yet scarcely see, from a slight curve in the street, that it exhibits itself in its more peculiar character. It is most irregular in its architecture, almost every building being self-contained, and of a different style, plan, size, and shape, from everything around it. It presents a greater number of stone fronts, some of them exceedingly chaste and elegant, than any other street in town, brick being the chief material employed in New York architecture. This building, with the pilastered front, is a bank; that beyond is an insurance office; beyond that again is a commission merchant's on a large scale; whilst opposite you have a broker's establishment, followed by two or three insurance offices, which are again confronted by as many banks across the way: and so on alternating in this way, until you reach the Custom-house, about three-fourths of the way up to Broadway. The buildings are all provided with basement stories, which are generally occupied by money-changers and solicitors. That noble-looking pile, constructed of greyish blue granite, on the left, which we are now approaching, is the Merchants' Exchange, erected since the great fire in 1834, when the old Exchange, with the Custom-house, fell a prey to the flames. A finer effect can scarcely be imagined than that produced by its deeply

recessed portico, formed by a lofty and massive colonnade, the shaft of each Ionic column, which is fluted, being composed of one immense block of granite. A low dome surmounts the edifice, which, however, is but partially seen, for the Exchange is so closely hemmed in on all sides by buildings, that no good view can be obtained of it from a distance. The great room is circular and of immense diameter, and is decorated with lofty Corinthian columns of marble, at least designed to be Corinthian, for they yet want their capitals. It belongs to a company of merchants, and is occupied along the basement and at the back, chiefly by brokers. It is made fire-proof, so as to avert from it the catastrophe which befel its predecessor.

A little further up, and on our right, we come to another edifice of a very different character, being entirely constructed of white marble in the form of a Greek temple of the Doric order. This is the property of the United States, being the Custom-house for the port of New York. It has two fronts, one on Wall-street, and the other on a street behind, running parallel to it, each of which is covered by a portico of eight massive columns. The Wall-street front is approached by a lofty flight of marble steps, as broad as the building is wide. The only side which it presents is deeply pilastered, something like the Cornhill side of our own Royal Exchange. It is fire-proof throughout, the roof being covered with immense slabs of marble. Its general effect is not so imposing as that of the Exchange. The ambitious marble looks less durable and massive than the sober granite; but, taking it all in all, it is decidedly one of the finest edifices in the country.

Between the Custom-house and Broadway, which is now full in view, Wall-street partakes more of the character of Fore, than of Lombard-street with us. Let us, therefore, turn sharp to the left, and make for the Battery, by plunging through the labyrinth of streets intervening between it and us. But before doing so, you ask, what noble florid Gothic pile is that, built of a dark brownish stone, which rises in such stately yet buoyant proportions at the head of Wall-street, and closes up the vista in that direction. It is Trinity Church, which we passed more than two hours ago in our walk up Broadway. It is but a few years since it was finished, and it stands in an enclosed space, on the western side of Broadway, directly opposite the junction of Wall-street with it. It is large, but it is not by its dimensions that it strikes you, particularly if you are conversant with the scale on which ecclesiastical edifices have been raised elsewhere. You are charmed by the purity and elegance of its design, as well as by the exquisite finish, which marks its every detail, without detracting, in the slightest degree, from its general effect. It is strongly and massively built, but the fret-work, with which it is profusely ornamented, gives it a light and airy appearance. Its beautiful spire, which rises for nearly 300 feet, resembles, in the elastic spring which it seems to take from the ground, that which surmounts the Hall of the General Assembly in Edinburgh. The spire of the latter, however, which is one of the most exquisite things extant of its kind, is much plainer and simpler, though not the less effective on that account, than that which forms the chief ornament of the former. There is not a city on earth to which Trinity Church would not be a first-rate architectural accession.

There is something both curious and suggestive in its position. It stands, pointing loftily to heaven, on a spot visible from almost every point of that street where Mammon is most eagerly and unaffectedly worshipped in America. There it is, as if perpetually to remind the busy throng that they cannot serve two masters. It actually seems as if, in a moment of serious reflection, they had, for their future benefit, taken that important text, and executed it in stone. But it is in vain that you look for any indication of the serious mood now. Amid the throng hurrying past you in all directions, and not one of whom seems to notice or care for you, you can discern the merchant's thoughtful look, the calculating brow of the money-changer, the quick keen glance of the attorney, the nervous twitching countenance of the speculator, and the quite business-like expression of the official; whilst, from the stream of faces gliding by you, you can pick out some flushed with hope, others clouded with apprehension, some radiant with satisfaction, and others shrivelled with disappointment; indicating, respectively, speculations that are promising or looking adverse, that have succeeded or failed. Trinity Church still looks down upon them, but how few of that anxious, quick-moving crowd seem conscious of its solemn rebuke! Take it and Wall-street together, and what a moral antithesis do they present! But its effect, if it ever had any, has been evanescent; and it is only when Sunday comes, and the places of business are closed, and when the bells toll and the churches are open, and multitudes flock into them in their holiday attire, that the world is—perhaps—for a time, forgotten.

Leaving Wall-street, the chosen seat of every species of speculation, and the great financial artery

of New York, we soon find ourselves, in threading our way to the Battery, amongst the more sober-looking, but not less imposing avenues of commerce. Here we are in Pearl-street, which, before we proceed many hundred yards, we have lost again, for, when we were least on our guard, it suddenly turned a corner, and left us. We shall soon come to it again, as the miner comes to a vein, which, for a time, he has lost. Both it and the adjacent streets, which are exceedingly narrow and very lofty, in the latter respect more resembling Paris than London, are replete with every variety of merchandise which the overcrowded warehouses are disgorging upon the streets. The narrow side-walk is covered with goods, whilst the thoroughfare, not many feet wide, is also here and there invaded, so that at some points you have no alternative, in proceeding, but to jump over boxes, or squeeze yourself, as you best can, between bales of merchandize. Nor is mid-air even free from the intrusion; for from many lofty cranes, heavy and bulky masses are dangling, in a way that makes you feel nervous for your head, whilst you are busy taking care of your feet. By-and-by we pass the Pearl-street hotel, an immense brick pile, seven stories high. It occupies the heart of what is yet known as the burnt district, that which was devastated by the conflagration of 1834. It is long since all traces of this frightful visitation have vanished; the only memorial of it now remaining being the evident newness of the streets, which present on all hands long narrow vistas of lofty red brick walls, perforated with innumerable windows, which are generally protected at night by massive iron shutters.

Emerging at length from the wholesale quarter,

we cross Whitehall into the Battery, and passing the lower end of Broadway, where we commenced our walk, and of Greenwich-street, a long, wide, and noble street running parallel to it, find ourselves, after a few steps further, upon the broad and spacious quays which line the estuary of the Hudson. The whole aspect of things is somewhat changed from that presented on the side of the city which we have just left. Instead of the forest of masts which rises over the East River, the Hudson, for some distance up from the Battery, presents us chiefly with a crowd of funnels. Instead of sailing vessels, we have steamers in the slips, as varied in their classes and sizes as they are in their destinations. Here are ferry-boats for Jersey city and Hoboken opposite, their unsonorous bells constantly belching forth harsh metallic sounds. There, again, are larger boats for Alleyn's Point and Stonington, rival lines to Boston, the remainder of the way to which, from both points, is accomplished by railway. Beyond is a splendid steam packet, one of a line plying to Newport, Rhode Island, now the most fashionable watering-places in America. Still further up, we come upon steamers for Amboy, about forty miles distant, on the New Jersey coast. It is approached by Staten Island Sound, and is the starting point for one of the railways to Philadelphia. But here we are abreast of the slip in which lie the Hudson River boats, plying between New York and Albany, the latter being the political capital of the State, and lying 160 miles up the river. One of these boats, the "Knickerbocker," is getting up her steam for a start. Her dimensions are enormous. In length she exceeds by several feet the once-celebrated ocean steamer, the "British Queen." Regarding merely her

upper works, her breadth is proportionate, her expanded wings and buoyant promenade decks giving her great apparent width of beam. But look at her hull, which is like a huge canoe, with a sharp wedge-like prow, which seems as if it would split up any floating log with which it might come in contact. Her wheels, too, are of great breadth and gigantic diameter, her paddle-boxes rising on either side like the vertical sections of a huge dome, and almost competing in height with the ponderous funnels behind them. She will be at Albany in nine hours after starting, including stoppages, for she can make her twenty miles an hour in ascending, and has made twenty-two in descending, the river. Where she is not as black as jet, she is as white as snow, and as the steam hisses from her escape pipe, she is as tremulous all over as is the tiger before taking his spring. Still further up we have a whole cluster of unshapely but business-looking tugs, some of them intended to tow sea-going vessels from and to the Atlantic, and others to tow sloops, barges, and schooners up and down the river. You can see two of the latter now making their way from above into port, each with a group of barges behind it, laden with barrels of flour and salt, which found their way to Albany from the county of Onondaga and the far west by the Erie canal. The upper slips are occupied by barges and the smaller sailing craft engaged in the river trade. But we need not further prolong our walk in this direction. The quays, all the way up, are spacious and convenient, as on the other side, and lined with rows of lofty and massive warehouses. Towards the upper end of the city, on the Hudson side, factories of the kind more particularly appertaining to a port, make their appear-

ance, whose tall chimneys give some variety to this view of the town. Although business on this side does not wear that intensified aspect which it assumes along the East River, the Hudson side of the city is nevertheless replete with all the indications of great commercial activity. And when the trade of the city so increases, that it cannot find adequate accommodation on the East River side, the lower portion of the port on the Hudson will exhibit a similar scene to that now daily witnessed on the other flank of the town.

The citizen of London has ample opportunity of discovering that there are, within the precincts of the city, as many wonders beneath as above the surface of the ground. Whenever a shaft is sunk, no matter for what purpose, into Piccadilly, the Strand, Cheapside, or any of the other great thoroughfares, the number of parallel iron pipes, together with the apparatus for sewerage disclosed, is really astonishing. New York has also its underground marvels. Until recently, the iron tubes which permeated its site were solely those which were required to distribute over the city the gas with which it is lighted. New York was then but ill-supplied with water, the springs within it being but few, and the water procured from them being of an inferior description. It was to remedy this great defect that the city, some years ago, undertook one of the most gigantic works to be found either in the new world or in the old. That which it wanted was a copious supply of excellent water. On examination it was found, that the nearest source whence that could be procured, in the greatest abundance and attended with the greatest facilities for conducting it to the city, was about forty

miles distant from it. About that distance above the town, the Croton River, a pure limpid stream, empties itself into the Hudson. The most feasible scheme that presented itself was to divert a portion of its current to New York. To accomplish this, a stupendous aqueduct has been constructed through the solid rock, over the valley, and across stream after stream, to the city. It commences five miles above the junction of the Croton with the Hudson, and I cannot do better than here transcribe the description of it given in the United States Gazetteer.

"The dam is 250 feet long, seventy wide at bottom and seven at top, and forty feet high, built of stone and cement. It elevates the water, so as to form a pond five miles long, covering 400 acres, and containing 500,000,000 gallons of water. From this dam, the aqueduct is continued, in some parts, by tunnelling through solid rocks, and crossing valleys by embankments, and brooks by ducts, to the Harlaem River, a distance of 33 miles. It is built of stone, brick, and cement, arched over and under, six feet nine inches wide at bottom, seven feet five inches at the top of the side walls, and eight feet five inches high. It has a descent of thirteen inches and a quarter per mile, and will discharge 60,000,000 gallons in twenty-four hours. It will cross the Harlaem River on a magnificent stone bridge, 1,450 feet long, with fourteen piers, eight of eighty feet span, and seven of fifty feet span, and 114 feet from tide-water to the top. This bridge will cost more than 900,000 dollars. It is in progress, and, for the present, the water is brought across the river in an iron pipe, laid as an inverted syphon. The receiving reservoir is at 86th Street, 38 miles from the Croton dam,

covering thirty-five acres, and containing 150,000,000 of gallons. The water is thence conveyed to the distributing reservoir on Murray's hill, 40th Street, in iron pipes. This covers four acres, and is built of stone and cement, forty-three feet high above the street, and contains 20,000,000 of gallons. Thence the water is distributed over the city in iron pipes, laid so deep underground as to be secure from frost. The whole cost of the work will be about 12,000,000 of dollars. No city in the world is now more plentifully supplied with pure and wholesome water than the city of New York, and the supply would be abundant, if the population were five times its present number."

The Croton not only now circulates, as its life-blood, through the city, but is its chief protection from the ravages of fire.

New York is, after New Orleans, the gayest city in the United States. Public amusements are much in vogue; and the town is amply supplied with the means of pandering to the taste for them. Balls, concerts, ballets, and operas, are well attended throughout the year; and the fashionable quarters, during winter, present one continued scene of gaiety. With all this, the New Yorkers combine a good deal of literary taste; and if the theatre is nightly well frequented, so also is the library and the lecture-room. The city has several literary institutions, some originating with associations, and others the result of individual munificence.

As in Paris, a great deal of New York life is spent out of doors. During summer, the oppressive heat drives people into the open air, particularly in the cool of the evening; and during winter they are

tempted out to enjoy the pleasures of sleighing. At the close of a summer afternoon, Broadway, particularly between the Battery and the Park, is crowded with promenaders of both sexes, generally dressed in the newest cuts, and in the most showy manner; for the New Yorkers take their fashions direct from Paris, in which they come much nearer the Parisians than we do. It is impossible to meet with a more finished coxcomb than a Broadway exquisite, or a "Broadway swell," which is the designation attached to him on the spot. Whilst multitudes are promenading to and fro, there are generally groups of strangers, either seated in comfortable arm-chairs, disposed in dozens on the wide pavement, in front of the hotels, or standing upon the steps leading into them, picking their teeth, to indicate to the passers by that they have just risen from a champagne dinner.

New York abounds in churches, many of which, from their graceful proportions and neat façades, add much to the beauty of the town. Notwithstanding its gaiety, it is a great centre of religious action, the May meetings in New York exciting as much interest amongst a portion of the population as our Exeter Hall assemblages do about the same period of the year amongst a part of the population of London. What Baltimore is to the Catholic, New York is to the Episcopal denomination in America—its chief focus and stronghold; there being fewer churches in the world more wealthily endowed (not by the State) than the Episcopal Church of New York.

The city is also an important pivot of political action. Its influence is, however, in this respect almost exclusively confined to the State, in one corner

of which it is situated. It exercises, for instance, but little influence upon the population of New Jersey, immediately across the Hudson. The ultra-democracy of New York are extremely excitable; but, although political excitement sometimes runs very high, it is seldom that it results in any outrage to either person or property. The great increase recently effected in the number of polling places at elections, has greatly conduced to the preservation of public order.

New York has upwards of thirty banks, whose combined capital exceeds thirty millions of dollars; and from thirty to forty insurance companies, possessing an aggregate capital of more than twelve millions. Its future destiny has been partly foreshadowed in its past progress. The aggregate tonnage of the arrivals in the port of New York, in 1810, amounted to 275,000 tons; in 1840, it had swelled to upwards of 618,000 tons. This is exclusive of steamboats, of which there are nearly a hundred, more or less, connected with the port, and of the smaller craft engaged in the coasting and inland trade. But its rapid growth is more correctly indicated by the increase of its population. In 1800, it contained 60,000 souls; in 1840, its population exceeded 312,000; in 1845, this latter number had risen to 371,000; so that, in the lifetime of a generation, the population had increased more than six-fold! In 1850, it is probable that it will exceed 430,000. When we consider the extent, resources, and capabilities of the immense region which it supplies, and that that region is yet but in the infancy of its progress, it is not easy to set limits to the growth of New York. The Americans are justly very proud of, and its residents passionately

attached to, it. On driving up to the Astor House, after landing from Boston, a young New Yorker, who had been in Europe for more than a year, was in the same sleigh with me. "There goes the old city!" said he in his enthusiasm, as we entered Broadway; "I could almost jump out and hug a lamp-post!"

CHAPTER V.

COMMERCE AND COMMERCIAL POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

Progress of American Commerce.—Its present Extent, and the variety of Channels in which it exhibits itself.—Foreign and Internal Trade.—Advantages of America for prosecuting both.—The effects of American Industry most perceptible in the increase of the latter.—Commercial Character of the People.—American Commerce judged of by its Monuments.—Revulsions in Trade in America.—The Commercial Question in America politically considered.—The Great Interests in conflict with each other.—Views, Objects, and Arguments, of the Protectionists and Free-Traders respectively.—The "American System."—Constitutional Questions involved in the Dispute.—Brief Account of the Struggle between Parties.—Free-Trade at present in the ascendant.—Present Position of Parties.—Future Prospects.—Commercial Destiny of America.—Reflections suggested thereby.

FROM no other point can the commercial condition of America be so advantageously surveyed as from the trading and commercial emporium of the continent. I propose, therefore, before leaving New York, to compress within the compendious limits of a single chapter, a succinct account of the commercial progress and policy of the Republic. My object is to present, at a glance, to the reader, an adequate idea of the extent to which American enterprise has, in this respect, been pushed, and the variety of objects which it embraces in its operations; and to enable him thoroughly to appreciate the exact position of each of the great interests which, as with us, have

constantly struggled for supremacy, and the disputes between which have not even yet been finally adjusted.

The limits to which I have confined myself, will be an ample guarantee that the reader is not about to be overwhelmed by elaborate calculations, or overborne by a repulsive array of statistical tables. My wish is, so far as this humble effort goes, to popularize the subject, by combining interest with instruction, carefully avoiding figures, except when indicative of great results, or absolutely necessary to subserve the purposes of illustration.

It is with no desire to bespeak a surreptitious sympathy, that I here allude to the difficulty of the subject. Fertile and ramified as it is, it were easy to enlarge upon it, as compared with the task of abridging without crippling it. Despairing of complete success, I nevertheless proceed—in the hope of conveying at least some useful instruction—in the first place, to lay before the reader the general results of the application, to its abounding resources, of the diversified activity of America.

It must be borne in mind, that the whole fabric of American commerce is the product of but two centuries of human industry, acting, however, under the influence of extraordinary stimulants. Strictly speaking, its birth should not date beyond the peace of 1783, when the young Republic took it into her own hands, untrammelled by navigation laws or other imperial restrictions. But even tracing its era from the first epoch of western colonization, we find American commerce overtaking and gradually outstripping commercial systems which had flourished for fully two hundred years before its very germ was laid, until it now acknowledges no rival, save in its ancient

parent, from whose thrall it broke loose when its freedom of action could no longer be controlled.

In estimating the progress of Transatlantic commerce, it is advisable to go no further back than the period from which commence the most regular, unbroken, and authentic accounts of its operations. In the year 1790, the condition of American commerce was such as may be readily appreciated from the following general statement of its results. The total value of the imports of that year did not exceed 5,000,000*l.* sterling, the value of the exports being about the same amount. If we descend a period of fifty-five years, its progress may be estimated from a glance at the results of the commercial operations of 1845. In that year the value of the imports exceeded 26,000,000*l.*; in other words, they had quintupled in little more than half a century. The value of the exports was but a fraction below the same amount, exhibiting a corresponding increase. This rapid increase may be better illustrated by a glance at what the last quarter of a century has done. The aggregate value of exports for the year ending 30th June, 1821, was a little upwards of 14,000,000*l.* sterling; whilst that of the year 1845 was, as already intimated, about 26,000,000*l.*, showing an increase of nearly 100 per cent. The value of the imports of 1821 was also upwards of 14,000,000*l.*, which, as compared with that of the imports of 1845, gives a similar result to that in the case of exports.* There is a feature in the export trade worth alluding to, as

* From official accounts recently published, it appears that the value of the exports and imports for the past year has, in either case, exceeded 32,000,000*l.* sterling. This shows an increase in both trades of about 23 per cent. in three years. So much for the free-trade tariff of 1846.

exhibiting still more strongly the rapid development of American wealth. Of the whole exports of 1821, nearly one-third consisted of foreign merchandize re-exported; whereas the re-exports of similar merchandize in 1845, scarcely amounted to one-seventh of the aggregate exports of that year. During the former year, only two-thirds of the aggregate exports were of domestic produce; during the latter, more than six-sevenths. This shows that the development of domestic industry has been at a ratio much more rapid than the mere aggregate commercial results would lead one to suppose.

It is unnecessary any further to pursue this branch of the subject, sufficient being laid before the reader to enable him to appreciate the rapid strides at which the commercial advances of America have been made. The objects embraced in the active and enterprising trade of the United States, both foreign and domestic, are as multifarious as may well be conceived. Its great staples, however, consist of cotton, tobacco, flour, sugar, and rice. Very nearly one-half of the aggregate exports of 1845 consisted of raw cotton alone, tobacco coming next in the scale, and then flour. The directions which this commerce has taken, are about as numerous as are the objects which it embraces, and are well indicated by the character of the shipping with which New York is all but begirt. There is not a sea upon earth but carries the enterprising flag of America; not a port, except such as they are absolutely prohibited, with which the Americans have not established a trading intercourse.

Nor is this all. The foreign trade alone is but an imperfect exponent of the progress of American industry. The expansion of that trade does not

wholly rest with the Americans themselves: it is regulated by the measure of other people's wants as well as by that of their own. It is only when we look at the internal trade of the United States, which is receiving from the hourly development of their own wants such gigantic accessions, that we become fully aware of the rapidity with which the material interests of that country are unfolding themselves, and of the real extent of that impetuous activity, which is productive of results without parallel in the economic history of the world.

There is no other country which can boast of advantages superior to those of the United States, for the purposes either of foreign commerce, or internal trade. For the one, their geographical position is eminently favourable; for the other, the variety of their productions, and their physical conformation, admirably adapt them. Situated almost midway between its two extremes, they present a double front to the Old World, from one of which they can hold direct communication with Europe, and from the other, a communication, as direct, with Asia. The time, indeed, is not far distant, when Eastern Asia and Western Europe will find themselves most accessible to each other through the continent of America. The United States are thus not only well situated for the purposes of their own trade, but apparently destined to be the common ground on which the two great sections of the Old World will yet meet for the transaction of theirs. This advantage of position plays an important part in the development of the foreign trade of the United States; in further estimating their capacity for which, we cannot overlook the superabundance of their exchange-

able commodities. As to their internal trade, Nature herself has thrown every facility in its way. With every variety of soil, climate, and production, America possesses in its vast rivers, estuaries, and lakes, those means of internal intercommunication, the want of which can only be supplied in other countries, even when physical obstacles are not insurmountable, by time, and by enormous outlays. Were the people apathetic, instead of being enterprising to a degree, the advantages which their country enjoys in this respect, would, of themselves, be provocative to industry and interchange. Such energies as the American people possess, acting on such resources, in the midst of such advantages, could be productive of but one result. Happily, too, they avoided a rock on which the bark of their prosperity, if not shattered to pieces, would have been greatly strained. That was not the country for artificial barriers, where nature had levelled almost all physical obstructions to trade.

The internal intercourse of America is as free as are the winds which sweep over its surface, and the waters which irrigate its valleys. The interchange of their commodities, too, is as free as the people are themselves in their personal intercommunication. For municipal purposes, the different States have their fixed known boundaries; but, in an economical light, they have no frontiers. It is when we take all this into account, that their progress appears less a miracle than a necessity. With unflinching energy, unbounded resources, and an unfettered internal trade, is it any wonder that they are so rapidly transforming the whole aspect of the country? How long could the wilderness withstand the persevering assaults of a civilization which brings such appliances to bear? If any one wants an illustration of the

advantages of free trade, he has only to look at the internal aspect of American commerce, and at the advances which are being daily made under its auspices by the great Anglo-American Zollverein.

A circumstance which has a great deal to do with the progress of America in this respect, is the essentially commercial spirit of the people. This spirit, though not peculiar to them, is nowhere else so universally, or so unreservedly displayed. There is no class affecting to scorn the avocations of trade—no one compromises his position by being a trader. With every stimulus to exertion, idleness is not, in America, deemed an honourable pursuit. The inducements to occupation are great. A growing community has increasing wants, which will not go unsupplied if it has the means of supplying them. This is the case in the United States; the demand is with them in a state of as constant progression as is the supply. The basis for enterprise expands as the population increases; and if new actors come into the field, there are new objects for them to operate upon. The consequence is, that business never, for any length of time, assumes in America that overdone aspect, which is too often familiar to it in older and less-favoured communities. Besides, it is the rapid road to wealth; and wealth gives great, if not the greatest, consideration in America. The learned professions are not regarded as a whit more honourable, whilst they are but slenderly remunerative. The youth who wants speedily to make a figure, sees the shortest road to the attainment of his wishes through the avenues of business. It is thus that they flock in crowds from the rural districts into the towns, the farmers' sons preferring the yard stick, with its better prospects, to the plough. Some of

those who have a more intellectual ambition, become lawyers and politicians; but the great majority get as soon as possible behind a counter, over which they soon jump, to become merchants on their own account. Children, too, very early discover the trading tendencies of a people who want many things, and have plenty of something or other to give in exchange for them. At school their bartering propensities soon manifest themselves, and before they leave it they become traders, both in habit and disposition. The bent of their lives is early taken, and seldom, if ever, lost. What a nation thus disposed can do, is illustrated by what a people thus habituated has done.

We frequently judge of a system from its monuments. American commerce need not shrink from being already tried by this test. Of the lordly cities which it has reared upon the sea-board there is no occasion to speak; its rapid development is, perhaps, still more visible in the effects which it produces in the interior. Under its fostering influence communities start up, as it were by magic, in the wilderness: the spot which is to-day a desert, may, thirty years hence, be the site of a flourishing town, containing as many thousand souls. These inland towns are being constantly brought to the surface by the commercial fermentation, which never ceases. They arise under no other influence than that of commerce —they come forth at the bidding of no other voice. Crags and fastnesses are not sought in America as sites for towns. The harbour, or the river's bank, or the neighbourhood of the canal, is the place where they arise; and what commerce does in this respect, no other power, unassisted by it, can do. Washington was designed for a great city; but there being no

commercial demand for it, the fostering care of the federal government, from which so much was expected, has ludicrously failed in making it so. Imperial power may have reared a capital on the swamps of the Neva; but it is commerce alone that could call forth, and sustain, a vast emporium on the sedgy delta of the Mississippi.

Occasional revulsions seem everywhere to rank with the necessities of commercial existence. In America they are not unfrequent, and are sometimes most calamitous. In no other country is the credit system carried to such an extent. Favourable as this may be to enterprise, it sometimes leads to great abuses. In the transactions of 1836 and 1837, we have a memorable instance of this. The imports of these years were enormous, far exceeding the amount already noticed as constituting the value of those of 1845. The inflation of the currency, and the expansion of the credit system in every department of trade, were then at their height. Previously to 1825, the loans of the United States Bank scarcely varied in their annual amount to the extent of three millions of dollars. But shortly before the memorable years in American commerce above alluded to, they had expanded upwards of 60 per cent. in the brief space of two years. The swarm of country banks followed this example, and the train was thus laid for the explosion which took place. Such was the glut of merchandize in the hands of the importers, that they laid aside the ordinary rules of caution in parting with their stock. The transactions which ensued were not more detrimental to the credit, than they were perilous to the commercial morality of the country. Capital was not felt to be a want—credit was, and did,

everything. Young men forsook their employment, fled to the sea-board, procured stock upon easy terms, returned, and set up for themselves; and the country swarmed with a new race of traders, in possession of no visible means. The consequences were not long in displaying themselves, and the disasters of the period are the best commentary upon the transactions which led to them. This, it is true, was an extraordinary crisis, but some of its accompaniments are permanent features in the American commercial system. Credit is too easily had, particularly by the young and inexperienced, and, consequently, frequently abused. Of the number of young men who set up for themselves, the proportion who soon afterwards become bankrupt is great. I remember when it was a common saying, that if a man wanted money, he had only to go and get stock, set up business, and fail when it was most expedient. But this evil in the system has a manifest tendency to cure itself.

Having thus glanced at the general features of American trade, it may be as well now briefly to direct the reader's attention to the commercial question, politically considered, in the United States. With a view to his better understanding the policy of the general government, the motives which have influenced that policy, and the effect which it has had, particularly upon the foreign commerce of the country—it is necessary to bring at once upon the stage the great interests which, almost since the date of its independence, have made a common battle-ground of the tariffs of the Union.

These are four in number—the manufacturing, the commercial, the cotton-growing, and the agricultural interests. In the commercial may be included the

shipping interest; whilst with the manufacturers may be classed the sugar-growers, their interests being identical, although their occupations are dissimilar. Between these interests the great object of strife has been for high or low tariffs. Sometimes, in the struggles which have taken place, they have been equally divided; at other times, by adroit manœuvring, the preponderance in numbers has been secured for one side or the other. The commercial legislation of the country indicates the strength of parties in the different contests which took place.

It will be seen at once that the difficulty chiefly lay, as it still lies, between the manufacturers and the cotton growers. The commercial interest has almost invariably sided with the latter, although they have not always been unanimous amongst themselves. The agriculturists have acted a wavering part in the protracted struggle, until lately throwing their weight generally into the scale of the manufacturers; a circumstance which alone enabled the latter not only to maintain their ground, but generally to predominate in the national councils. Had the farmers been, from the first, true to their own interests, the contest would have been of short duration. The manufacturers unaided could not have kept the field, and a mere revenue tariff would, long ere this, have been engrafted as a permanent feature upon American policy. Hitherto, the brunt of the battle, on the free-trade side, has been borne by the cotton-growers, who, until lately, have been deserted by those upon whose co-operation they might naturally rely; whilst their allies in the commercial interest have been too apathetic to render them any very efficient assistance. But, notwithstanding the inequality of the battle

which they have had to wage, they have managed, by the inherent justice of their cause, the excellence of their tactics, and the energy and talent of their leaders, to preserve an unbroken front under repeated discomfitures, until they have at length apparently turned the tide in their favour so effectually, that it is not likely again to leave them stranded. The history of the struggle is interesting, and may be briefly sketched.

As already observed, the wavering of the agricultural body has constituted the strength of the one party and the weakness of the other. The great object of both, therefore, has been to secure the farmers; and in this object the protective party have heretofore generally succeeded. Their identity of interest with the cotton-planters was obvious, but the promises of the manufacturers were enticing and specious.

In acting on the agricultural body, the manufacturers have appealed to their interest and their nationality. What the farmer wanted was a market for his produce—the manufacturer promised to provide him with one. He was reminded that New England, which was the seat of domestic manufactures, was, so far as regarded the chief articles of food, a non-producing country. If he objected that his market there was limited, it was replied, that the industry which gave rise to it was as yet in its infancy; that, judging from its past progress, it would soon be able to meet all his wants; and that it would be steady in its requirements, and progressive in their increase, instead of being characterized by the constant fluctuations of a foreign demand, to which the free-traders taught him chiefly to look. There was

something plausible in all this, and the agricultural mind, never very bright, was for a time carried away by it. A home-market, at one's own door, and steady and constant in its demands, seemed preferable to depending upon the wants of foreigners, whilst it appealed to a feeling of which the manufacturers were too adroit not to avail themselves.

It was upon this feeling that was based the celebrated "American System," of which Mr. Clay, if not the author, was the most eloquent champion. Independence in everything of the foreigner, was its motto; and prohibition, where practicable, its policy. The national vanity was appealed to, to constitute the Republic a world within itself. Having the means of independence within their grasp, why not have the patriotism to use them? Their capabilities were glowingly contrasted with their present condition. Why should they not clothe as well as feed themselves, when they had both equally in their power? It was represented as degrading to a great people to be unnecessarily beholden to another people for anything. The mutuality of dependence was kept out of sight, as was the virtual independence to which such mutuality of dependence gave rise. It was no balm to the wounded feelings of the patriots, that, if England clothed America, America might feed England. Absolute independence was their aim, at whatever cost it might be purchased; indeed, Nature herself had decided the question for them. They had the raw material in abundance; and, as they were not deficient in skill and industry, why should they send it abroad to be spun? The raw cotton was at their doors, inviting them, as it were, to convert it at home into the woven fabric. By so doing they would

greatly enhance the accumulations of domestic wealth, whilst they would be, to all intents and purposes, a self-subsisting people. The influence which this would confer upon them in peace, and the power which it would give them in war, were dwelt upon with befitting emphasis. All this, it was true, implied a preliminary struggle, but the probation would be short—the result glorious.

Nor was it on the farmers only that this patriotic policy was pressed. What would the cotton-growers lose by it? The protectionists only meant to transfer their market, having no intention to deprive them of it. Let them only encourage New England industry, and it would soon absorb all their produce. Not that it was supposed that the planters themselves were likely to be deluded by this shallow argument; its design being to follow up the impression made upon the agricultural body by the appeal to their own interests, by pretending that those of no section of the community would be injured by the policy proposed. This placed the planters in a position doubly invidious. Even assuming that their interests would be compromised, they were opposing those interests to the general welfare and obvious policy of the state; conduct which became much more odius when it was taken for granted that they would ultimately share with others in all the profits of protection. But the planters were not to be hoodwinked. England was the great market for their staple produce, and they were not to be driven from it by any promises of what the northern capitalists would yet do for them at home. Every effort was used by the latter to show that these promises were not groundless. The consumption of raw cotton in

England was compared to that in New England, to show how much more rapid was the enlargement of the latter than that of the former market. A certain period was taken from which to date the comparison, such as the year 1816, when the home consumption was about 11,000,000 lbs., while that of England was about 80,000,000 lbs. A later period was then taken, comprising a few years, when it was shown that New England had quadrupled her consumption, whilst Old England had scarcely doubled hers—as if doubling a consumption of eighty millions was not a much greater feat than quadrupling a consumption of eleven millions. Proceeding with the comparison, they at length reached the year 1845, when the home consumption amounted to upwards of 170,000,000 lbs. that of England to upwards of 600,000,000 lbs.; in other words, the one had increased sixteen-fold, whilst the other had not increased eight-fold. But so far as the practical question before the planter was concerned, the English market was still the great field for him, which had multiplied its demand in thirty years by eight times eighty millions, whilst the home-market had increased its demand by only sixteen times eleven millions. The one had increased its consumption by upwards of 150 millions of pounds, whilst the other had increased its demand by upwards of 500 millions. Which then, as to practical result, had conferred the greatest benefit on the cotton-growing interest? The planters well knew which, and stuck fast to their creed. So far as they were concerned, the comparison was as fallacious as it would be to say that a child of three years of age had gained upon a man of twenty-one, because at the end of six years it had trebled its age, whereas he

had added little more than a third to his. Taking small bases and large bases to calculate upon, the multiples may be very much in favour of the small, without affecting, in the least degree, the practical question at issue. That question is,—Has the English market, starting from 1816, kept its ground, as compared to the American? Not only has it done this, but it has infinitely gained on its competitor. In 1816 it was in advance of the home-market in its consumption of raw cotton by only 69,000,000 of pounds; in 1845 it was in advance by 430,000,000. It matters little, then, to the planter, by what multiple either England or America had in the meantime increased its consumption, for England has not only kept the vantage-ground on which she started, but greatly improved it.

The "American system" owed its temporary success more to a national weakness than to the soundness of its policy. A man might as reasonably strive to be independent of his shoemaker, as one nation endeavour to be independent of another, when their wants and aptitudes adapt them for mutual interchange. Yet such is the system which has made reputation for politicians, and fortunes for capitalists. Its advocacy is one of the distinguishing features of the Whig party; its principal champions being Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, and Mr. Abbot Laurence, himself a wealthy manufacturer. Mr. Webster's connexion with the question is not the most creditable passage in his political life, which he commenced by being an ardent free-trader.

It is now time to direct attention to the ground occupied by the free-traders. They take their stand upon the intrinsic merits of the question, and upon the federal constitution. They advise the farmers to

look abroad for markets for their produce. The home-market is theirs already, and must remain theirs; whereas it is only by a concession of equivalents that they can secure the custom of the foreigner. Besides, the home-market can never expand in proportion to their wants, the consequence of being confined to which would be accumulated products and low prices. Yet it is for this that they are called upon to foster domestic fabrics, of an inferior description, at high prices. English goods of fine texture may be had for little wheat, but they must not take them, because they are English; American goods of a coarse texture will cost more wheat, but then they should be taken because they are American. Is this the principle on which, as a people, they should act? It is certainly not that on which individuals wish to act. Their true policy is to buy, not only where they can get the best article, but where what they have to give in exchange will go the longest way. In this policy the whole body of consumers, it is contended, have an interest; inasmuch as the farmer can virtually manufacture, by means of his plough, better and more cheaply than can the manufacturer with his loom. A free exchange, with England and other countries, of agricultural products for manufactured articles, would virtually transfer the seat of manufactures to the valley of the Mississippi. In every point of view the interest of the farmer is identified with free-trade; through its means alone can he dispose of his surplus produce, and fill the country with fabrics—foreign, it is true, but excellent and cheap. And as to the planters themselves, the home-market, which is secure to them, consumes but a fraction of their

yearly produce. Whilst any three of the grain-growing States can of themselves supply the home-market with provisions, the State of Mississippi alone can supply it with cotton. What then is to become of the Carolinas, of Georgia, of Alabama, and Louisiana, if the markets of Europe are to be rendered inaccessible to them? So far from its being their object to cripple the manufactures of England, their policy is to stimulate them. The object of the New England capitalist is twofold—to escape foreign competition, and to glut the home-market with the raw material, for the purpose of enabling him to manufacture all the more cheaply, and sell all the more dearly. And what is the effect of all this? Simply, that twenty millions of people are mulcted enormously to the benefit of a few thousand capitalists. The revenue received from imports in 1845 exceeded twenty-seven millions of dollars; but it would be erroneous to suppose that this was the sum-total of the tax paid for the benefit of the protected classes. The virtual operation of the then existing tariff was, by the enhanced value which it gave to domestic fabrics, to burden the people with an additional tax to double that amount for the benefit of the manufacturers. For every dollar, then, which that tariff put into the federal treasury, it put two into the pockets of the capitalists.

The constitutional ground taken by the free-traders is—that a tariff bill is simply a *revenue* bill. Being thus purely a bill for raising revenue, it should propose no other object beyond this, its constitutional intendment. The moment that it is framed for the purpose of embracing the profits of capital, it becomes a bill for something else than raising revenue,

and that something else is not included amongst the specified and enumerated powers of Congress. An unnecessarily high tariff is not only a means of raising revenue, but it is also in effect an enactment that capital, invested in particular channels, shall divide larger per-centages than that invested in other pursuits. The unconstitutionality of this is as obvious as are its injustice and inequality.

Such are the grounds taken by the free-traders on this great and engrossing subject, and such is the language which they hold to the farmers, whose support they are desirous of securing. It is to the ranks of the democrats as a party, that the advocacy of these doctrines is confined; the free-trade chiefs being Mr. Calhoun and Mr. M'Duffie in the Senate, and Mr. Mackay in the House of Representatives.

Anything like a detailed account of the protracted contest which has been waged by the parties, thus marshalled against each other, would be here manifestly out of place. Suffice it to say, that the commercial legislation of the Union has been frequently modified by their differences. The high protective tariff of 1828 seemed to bring matters to a crisis, resulting in that memorable struggle which threatened to dissever the Union, and which was only terminated by the compromise bill of 1832. This bill lasted till 1842, when a new tariff act was passed, more stringent than its predecessor in its enactments, during the Whig episode, which was marked by the accidental presidency of Mr. Tyler. During the interval which succeeded between that and the passing of the tariff-bill of 1846, free-trade principles made great progress throughout the valley of the Mississippi.

The farmers began to suspect that they had been hoodwinked by their New England allies; and the planters immediately profited by their suspicions. The result was a manifest change in the national sentiment, previously to the presidential nominations in 1844. A low tariff for revenue purposes alone was, for the first time, made one of the leading principles of the whole democratic party. The points which they assumed were these: that no more money should be levied on imports than was necessary for the purposes of government; that the maximum rate of duty upon any and every article should be the minimum duty compatible with the largest amount of revenue; that the maximum duty, thus defined, should be imposed upon luxuries; and that all arbitrary minimums and all specific duties should be abolished, and *ad valorem* duties substituted in their stead. Such were the commercial principles which figured amongst the more prominent objects of democratic policy in 1844, and to carry out which, amongst other things, Mr. Polk's government was installed into office in 1845. The result was the tariff-bill of 1846, which established, for the first time, the financial policy of the Union upon a purely revenue basis.

To the general reader, much of the foregoing may be very uninteresting. It will not seem misplaced, however, to such as desire to understand the commercial question as it exhibits itself in the United States. It is a question in which we, on this side of the Atlantic, have a deep interest. Nor is the struggle between parties yet over. The Union will yet ring with their strife; and it will not be uninteresting to the Englishman to be acquainted, when their future

contests arise, with the parties in the field, the views which they entertain, and the interests which they have to subserve.

It cannot here fail to be remarked that, although the point at issue is the same as in this country, the parties in the two countries respectively are marshalled on very different sides. Here, the struggle of capital has been for freedom of trade; there, it has been for protection: here, the landed interest has contended for restriction; there, one section of it has ever fought for relaxation; and now all sections combined seem to struggle for the same end. In the New as in the Old World, the battle has been between the landlords and the cotton-lords, but they have changed colours in the fight. In both, protection is for the time prostrate; the cotton-lords having achieved in one country the triumph which has fallen to the landlords in the other.

In the sketch here given, I have confined myself strictly to the main features of the question—taking no notice of those minor interests which play their own parts in the contest, but subsidiary to the evolutions of the greater interests alluded to.

In a country in which the revolutions of party are so frequent and sudden as in the United States, it is not easy, from the past or present, to predicate anything with certainty of the future. But the signs of the times by no means favour the belief that the commercial question in America has yet attained its final adjustment. It is not likely that any very permanent deviation will again take place from the policy which triumphed in 1846; but there is some reason to fear that the commercial policy of the Union will occasionally be disturbed by being still made

to oscillate, more or less, between the views of the protectionists and free-traders. The former are disappointed, but not discouraged by their late defeat; and their strength and influence are yet such as to require constant vigilance on the part of the friends of free-trade. The late elections have given to the Whig party a small majority in the Lower House; but so long as the Senate and the Executive Government remain in the hands of the democrats, no great alteration of the existing tariff need be apprehended. But who can tell how long this will continue so, or how the whirlwind of the next presidential election may affect the question? There would be more hope of the permanency of the settlement of 1846, if some time were given it to show the advantages of its working. But the next 'election is already impending, and the protectionists are busily at work, particularly with Pennsylvania, whose weight in the federal legislature is great, and which was the greatest sufferer by the late change in the tariff. Should she secede from the democratic party and go over to the Whigs, which there is every reason to believe she will do, her defection, together with General Taylor's personal popularity, will be almost sure to turn the scale at the coming presidential contest in favour of the Whigs. But even then, to affect the tariff, they must not only have the President, but both houses of Congress in their hands. They will have the Lower House, but it is extremely doubtful if they can carry the Senate. If not, the tariff is safe, for a few years more at least: and every year's grace which it receives, will increase the chances of its permanency; for when the West is once thoroughly alive to its advantages, so far as it is concerned, both Whigs and Democrats from

that quarter, however they may differ on questions purely political, will be at one upon the commercial question.*

But a question here arises, perhaps more interesting still, which, without immediate regard to tariffs, concerns the commercial destinies of the Transatlantic Republic. This is a matter, in contemplating which, speculation finds itself utterly at fault. Taking the

* Since the above was written, the Presidential election for 1848 has transpired. Partly by the anticipated defection of Pennsylvania from the democrats, and the divisions existing in New York, and partly by the enthusiasm in his favour, occasioned by his successes in Mexico, General Taylor has triumphed over his fidgety and irascible competitor. This is an event over which, in the present state of the political affairs of the world, the friends of peace must everywhere rejoice. But it is the high-tariff party that has succeeded; and they have now the Executive Government and the House of Representatives in their hands. The Senate, however, is still democratic, by a considerable majority,—a circumstance which insures, for a year or two at least, the Bill of 1846. But it is by no means certain, considering the favourable experience that the Union has so far had of its working, that the victorious Whigs would have felt themselves authorized to meddle with it, at least to any serious extent, even had the Legislature been completely at their command. But, waiving all speculations as to what they would have done under such circumstances, it is sufficient, for the present, to know that the Senate remains democratic. A few years more, if it remains undisturbed, may give the tariff such a hold, that the policy which it symbolizes will become impregnable, no matter what may be the condition of parties. Pennsylvania, some of whose interests have suffered most severely by the change, has not shown herself to be implacable, after all. She has gone for the Whigs, but by so trifling a majority, that there is reason to hope for her return, very soon, to the democratic ranks. In truth, the people of Pennsylvania are becoming fully alive to the fact that they are interested in a low tariff, whilst it is only the iron and the coalmasters who are interested in a high one. If Pennsylvania finally throws herself into the free-trade scale, which she is likely to do, although for some time they may rejoice over temporary and partial successes, the game of the protectionists is virtually lost.

realisation of the past for our guide, the probabilities of the future seem to transcend the line of credibility. The Americans have it in their power to become all they dream of,—a self-subsisting, independent people, feeding and clothing themselves, and able to feed and clothe the world besides. To this, things ultimately, if left to take their course, will of themselves tend. But would it be worth the necessary cost to attempt to precipitate events? The United States are greater in their prospects than in all they have yet achieved. What is there to prevent them doing all that we have done? Have they not ingenuity equal to our own? have they not industry and enterprise to a degree which does credit to their origin? And if they want capital, are they not daily accumulating it? Nay, more, what is to prevent them doing more than we have done? Great as are our resources, they are trifling as compared to the undeveloped wealth of the North American continent. What we have done with capital, industry, and skill, they can achieve, and much more; for to these they add the raw material, for which our manufacturing interests are so largely dependent upon them. And in view of the rivalry at present existing, this is a dependence which cannot be contemplated with indifference. As regards the supply of cotton, we are as much at the mercy of America as if we were starving and to her alone we looked for food. She need not withhold her wheat: America could starve us by withholding her cotton. True, it is as much her interest as ours to act differently; and so long as it continues so, no difficulty will be experienced. But a combination of circumstances may be supposed, in which America, at little cost to herself, might strike us an irrecoverable blow:

a crisis might arise, when, by momentarily crippling our industry, she might push in and deprive us of the markets of the world. And who, should the opportunity arise, will guarantee her forbearance? Fill England with provisions—let her harbours be choked and her granaries bursting with their stores—what a spectacle would she present on a stoppage of one year's supply of cotton! It would do more to prostrate her in the dust, than all the armaments which America and Europe combined could hurl against her. What a tremendous power is this in the hands of a rival! The day may come, even should inclination be dead, when self-interest may drive her to the policy of shutting up our English factories, and crushing our English trade. She has, as it were, at her command, the great dam, from which all our motive power is derived, and has only to close the sluices, when she wishes our machinery to stop. It is the consciousness of this absolute dependence that induces many to look anxiously elsewhere for the supply of that, for which we are now wholly beholden to a rival. The cultivation of cotton in India is no chimera; the time may come when we may find it our safety.

Whatever may be our experiences, or the conduct of America in this respect, it is yet destined to rear up a fabric of commercial greatness, such as the world has hitherto been a stranger to. On such a theme it would be idle to speculate minutely; but this much at least may be safely predicated of a people with ingenuity equal to, and with resources ten times as great as ours, and with an enterprise which drives them with ardour into every channel of trade, from ransacking the South Sea for whales, to trafficking round the world with ice.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM NEW YORK TO PHILADELPHIA.

Cross the Hudson. — Scramble for Seats. — State of the Rail. — Device for obviating a Difficulty.—Aspect of the Country.— Triumph over Impediments. — A sudden Halt. — An awkward Plight.—An uncomfortable Night.—A dreary Morning.—Escape from a novel Confinement. — Arrival on the Delaware. — The Ferry-boat.—Arrival at Philadelphia.

My destination, on leaving New York, was Philadelphia, about ninety miles distant from the former city. The journey may be said to be performed by railway, although it commences with one steam ferry and ends with another. We were conveyed across the Hudson, in about a quarter of an hour, to Jersey city, already noticed as forming a feature in the panoramic view of New York; on arriving at which the passengers jumped in crowds upon the floating slip where we landed, and fled with a precipitation, which might have led one to suppose that each and every of them had been pursued by a sheriff's officer, or as if they had been laying wagers with each other on the way across. I was still wondering at the cause of this spontaneous exhibition of agility, when it occurred to me that I might as well do as the rest

did, in case there might be some danger which they were escaping. I accordingly took to my heels—I did not know why—and followed the breathless and panting crowd into a large unfinished-looking brick building, which, on entering, I found to be the railway station. Once within the station, the hurry-scurry, if possible, increased: men jostling each other, and rushing in at every available aperture into the cars, like so many maniacs—conduct which all the more surprised me, as it was still a quarter of an hour to the time of starting. Inside the cars, again, the scuffle was such, that I began to think the presence of the New Jersey police would be very opportune. I kept aloof until I found, from the quiet which succeeded, that the riot had, by some means or other, been quelled, and it was only on venturing inside one of the cars that I discovered the cause of the tumult. It appears that, in winter, there is a choice of seats, the preferable ones being such as are not too near, or too far from, the stove. The race then was for these seats; and, as I entered, those who occupied them regarded me with an expression, in which it was very easy to read—"Didn't you wish you might get it?" I consoled myself, however, for any loss that I might have sustained, by the reflection that I should be as wise as the rest of them, the next time.

The railway connecting the two capitals, lies entirely within the State of New Jersey, which is flanked on either side by the Hudson and the Delaware. For the right-of-way across the intervening State, the Company, which is principally composed of New Yorkers and Philadelphians, has to pay into the State treasury one dollar per head on the passengers conveyed by it—an arrangement which goes far

to lighten the burdens of taxation in New Jersey. There is another, but less direct route, through the same State, connecting Philadelphia by railway, with Amboy on Raritan Bay, from which the rest of the way is performed by steamboat to New York, a very pleasant sail in the summer time, when one can enjoy the picturesque beauties of Staten Island Sound.

On the previous night there had been a severe storm, accompanied by a heavy fall of snow. The succeeding day had been bright, but the wind blew strongly from the west, carrying the snow in blinding whirlwinds on its wings. Towards the afternoon it had considerably abated, and there was every probability of our being able to proceed. As the line was buried in snow, three powerful engines were attached to the train. The first of these was preceded by an enormous snow plough, an indispensable feature in the winter appanages of an American railway. It was so contrived as, when impelled by the engine, to clear the line of snow to within a few inches of the rail, strong brooms attached to the frame of the engine immediately in front of the wheels completing the work, by brushing the rail bare and clean. We started at a slow and cautious pace, as befitted a train having no visible line to follow. For the first few miles we encountered no difficulty, the snow having lain lightly as it fell. We soon quickened our pace therefore, when the sturdy plough did its work nobly. It first bored into the snow, seeking for the buried line, like a ferret burrowing for a rabbit, and then tore up the white covering which concealed it, throwing it in fragments on either side, sometimes for a distance of twenty yards; and every now and then, when it encountered a slight drift, sending it in a shower over

the whole train, as a stout ship treats the billow that would use her roughly.

Shortly after leaving Jersey city, we passed an extensive cutting through the solid rock; a work in every way more formidable than the celebrated cutting on the Birmingham line. From this we emerged upon a vast flat sedgy country, as level as a bowling green, covered with reeds in some places, and in others with long rank grass, both of which, the latter in brown tufts, peered here and there through the snow. The whole of this level tract is one vast basin surrounded by uplands, and bears every indication of having been the bed of some shallow lake, which, by degrees, drained itself off into the Hudson. It was whilst crossing it, that the effect of the snow-plough was most perceptible and curious. In front of us nothing was to be seen but one widely extended monotonous sheet of snow, whilst behind, as if summoned up by magic, lay the denuded rails as clean as if nothing had ever enveloped them. It almost seemed as if we were flying over the country and laying down the line as we went along.

During the spring months a great proportion of this tract is in a state of prolonged inundation; and during the heats of summer, the still brimful streams, which intersect it, seem as if in want of a compass that they may know which way to run.

On quitting this dreary level, the country becomes more interesting, its surface being broken into gentle undulations, between which nestle warm and fertile valleys. All around then wore the cheerless look of winter, but a prettier piece of country can scarcely be imagined than this in the months of July and August, when the orchards are gleaming with their

golden crop, and the breath of summer rustles merrily through fields of waving Indian corn.

Our first stoppage was at Newark, the most considerable town in New Jersey, but not its capital.

"This is the great champagne manufactory of America," said a New Yorker, sitting by me.

"Champagne manufactory?" I repeated, not exactly comprehending him.

"The best cider in the country is made here," he added; "and by far the greater portion of the best champagne, which we import, comes from Newark."

I frequently afterwards tasted this beverage in its real, and I have no doubt, in its assumed character, and found it excellent as a summer drink. Many is the American *connoisseur* of champagne, who has his taste cultivated on Newark cider.

Between this and the town of New Brunswick, nothing particularly occurred, with the exception that the difficulties, which the snow interposed to our progress, increased as we proceeded. It no longer lay softly on the ground, but was drifted in wreaths across the line. The imperviousness which it assumes in this state is almost incredible, being packed together by the wind, until it becomes nearly as hard as a board. Through some of these wreaths we made our way with difficulty, at one plunge, the whole train sustaining a shock in the operation, like that given to a ship struck by a heavy sea. Others were more formidable, and were not thus to be dealt with, bringing us to a sudden stop in our career, when the train would back, rush at them again like a huge battering ram, back again if necessary, and repeat the dose, until, by successive efforts, the obstacle was overcome. When more than usual force was required, in tender mercy to the passengers, who

were sometimes thrown "all of a heap" by these operations into the fore-part of their respective carriages, the train would be detached, and the locomotives set at it themselves, taking a good race, so as to strike with the more effect. It was amusing to watch this rough and novel species of tournament, the sturdy engines sometimes nearly breaking a lance with the enemy, and at others disappearing for a moment, amid a cloud of snowy fragments, scattered about in all directions, as if a mine had been sprung. The breach at length made, back they would come for the train, which they tugged along like so many camp followers, until a fresh obstacle had to be stormed.

New as all this was to me, it was exciting and amusing enough so long as it occasioned us no serious detention; but just as we were approaching the New Brunswick station, we ran into a tremendous wreath with such force, as to baffle all our efforts to get out of it again. In vain did the engineers use every device which mortal engineer could hit upon. There were the locomotives half-buried in the snow, and there they would remain. The poor plough, which bore the brunt of the battle, was completely invisible. Our position was like that of a great sword-fish which thrusts his formidable weapon into a ship's side with such effect that he cannot extricate himself again.

"Snagged, I reckon," said a Mississippian to the company in general.

"We're not aground, no how, that's clear," added a Missourian beside him.

"I should like to see the ground to put my foot on," said a man from New Hampshire, who must have stood about six feet six in his stockings.

"I am sure, stranger, you needn't want ground where a seventy-four will float," ejaculated the

Mississippian, laughing and eyeing him from head to foot. The rest joined in the laugh against the New Hampshire Anak, who drew in his legs under his seat, as if he was shutting each of them up like a clasp knife.

We now anxiously watched the progress of every effort made for our relief, until at length the chilling intelligence was conveyed to us that the fires had all been extinguished, and that the water had become frozen in the boilers. He was a bold man who made this dismal report to about three hundred people, whose rage increased with the hopelessness of their position. We were in a pretty predicament certainly. With three locomotives but no fire, we were like a besieging army with plenty of artillery but no ammunition. There was nothing left for us but to seek the station the best way we could, which we did by making a detour of the wreath, and wading sometimes up to the middle in snow. On gaining it, we found it a large, comfortless room, leaving but little to choose between it and the carriages which we had left. We there learnt the impossibility of our proceeding, as the wreath, which had impeded us, extended for fully half a mile along the line. We also ascertained that the train from Philadelphia had also stuck fast at the other side of it.

Seeing how the case was, I made my way to the nearest hotel, in the hope of finding a bed. But there was no shelter extended to a forlorn British subject by this house of Brunswick, the beds being pre-engaged, as at Norwich. So back again, it being now dark, I scrambled through the snow to the station, where I found many loading themselves with billets of wood, others provided with kettles full of hot water, and others again with bottles of spirits,

with glasses and sugar. These were signs not to be mistaken, and I inquired of a fellow-passenger where the orgie was to take place. He informed me that they had just made up their minds to make a comfortable night of it in the beleaguered carriages. I abdicated all independent action, and followed the crowd. We were soon once more seated in our respective cars, with a brisk fire in their respective stoves; and as a constant intercourse was kept up between us and the bar-room at the station, we were not wanting in some of the creature comforts. We had a newly married couple in our carriage, and they alone had my sympathy. The ceremony had been performed that very day in New York, and they were now on their way to Philadelphia on their marriage trip. They were both young, the bridegroom apparently not exceeding twenty, and the bride looking about sixteen. There she sat, in her ribbons and orange blossoms, looking shy, confused, disappointed, and half sorrowful. Poor thing! I pitied her.

I slept fitfully during the night, as did most of my fellow-sufferers, some of them dreaming of express trains, and waking to a dismal reality. The wind still blew fiercely from the north-west, the fine snow beating like steel filings against the windows of the cars. When morning broke, we found ourselves completely imbedded to windward, in a fresh accumulation, which had risen against us, in that quarter, overnight. We emerged with difficulty from our prisons, and again sought the hotel, where we breakfasted, and remained till nearly evening. In the mean time, every appliance was brought to bear to clear the line. A small army of men with shovels prepared the way for the snow-plough, which kept constantly at their heels; at one time, in a mere freak, pushing these

men, shovels and all, deep into the wreath, from which they were extricated, more frightened than hurt. These operations had scarcely been continued for a quarter of a mile, when those at work encountered another party, similarly employed, coming in the opposite direction. They met with a shout, in which we all joined, and the passengers of the two trains solaced each other, for some time, with a mutual recital of their sufferings. We found that we had fared the better of the two; for, the Philadelphia train having been interrupted half a mile from any succour, the passengers by it had to weather the night, as they best could, without fire, or any of the other comforts, which were at our command.

It was seven o'clock ere we finally quitted New Brunswick, and, in three hours more, we were on the left bank of the Delaware. The picture was gloomy enough, which loomed upon my sight, in the imperfect light of a star-lit sky, as I stood upon the deck of the ferry-boat. In the foreground was the broad expanse of the Delaware, literally covered with broken masses of ice, which floated up and down with the tide; whilst on the opposite shore gleamed the lights of the city, as few and far between as are those of London on the Thames. It was some time ere we got under weigh, and we took fully twenty minutes to cross, the ice sometimes defying the efforts of the lusty, thick-headed ferry-boat. To save time, our luggage was distributed to us on board. It was bitter cold, and I was heartily glad when, at length, after a somewhat chequered journey, performed, under ordinary circumstances, in from four to five hours, I stepped ashore in the "Quaker city."

CHAPTER VII.

PHILADELPHIA.

An unexpected Reception.—An indigenous Product, and an Exotic. A Negro Porter and Guide.—Characteristics of Philadelphia.—Public Buildings.—The United States Bank.—The State House. Girard College.—Its Founder's Will.—Street-Architecture.—Situation of Philadelphia.—The Schuylkill.—The Water-works.—Fairmount.—External Life in Philadelphia.—Habits and Tastes of the People.—Excursions in the Neighbourhood.—Camden.—Contrast between the Two Shores of the Delaware.—View of the City from the New Jersey shore.

On landing, I found all as still as if we had entered the precincts of a churchyard. The ferry-boat slip was deserted, not a soul appearing to welcome us, or give us succour. On inquiry of the captain, as to the means of getting my luggage transported to Jones's Hotel, to which I was recommended by a friend in New York, that functionary informed me that outside were plenty of porters to execute our orders. "Outside" had reference to a high and close wooden paling, which railed off the slip from the adjacent street, in which paling was a door, which, in due course of time, was thrown open. The gush which follows the displacing of the plug from a water cask, is not more spontaneous or impetuous than was then the crush of the grinning, jabbering, and

officious negroes, who sprung upon us from their ambuscade, and overpowered us before we had time to recover from our surprise. I found myself in a moment between two of them, who leered at me most hideously, their white teeth, and the whites of their eyes, shining ghastlily in the feeble light of the solitary lamp, which did its best to illuminate the slip.

"Porter, Sa," said one of them, thrusting, at the same time, into my hand a card, with 23 upon it, in large characters, as black as himself.

"I'm in de cheap line, massa," said the other,—"no 'nop'ly's my word."

"Cheap!—neber mind him, Sa; he's only a nigga from Baltimore, just come to Philadelphy," retorted the first speaker, regarding his competitor with scowling eyes and pouting lips. He then continued: "I'se born here, Sa, and know de town like a book. Dat ere nigga not seen good society yet—knows nuffin—habn't got de polish on.—Git out, nigga, and clean you self;" and he turned upon his heel, and laughed heartily—yhaw—yhaw—yhaw.

It was not his familiar contact with good society, or any superior grace which I perceived in him, but the circumstance of his nativity, which induced me to give the preference to 23, judging myself safer in the hands of a native citizen, who had a reputation to sustain, than in those of a mere bird of passage. I accordingly commissioned him to carry my luggage to Jones's.

"De best house in Philadelphy, Sa," said he, as he transferred my portmanteau to his truck.

"Is it far off?" I inquired.

"Good bit from de water," said he, "but not fur when you get dere."

Having delivered himself of this incontrovertible proposition, he disappeared in the crowd, from which he soon emerged, bearing upon his shoulders a huge leather trunk, formidably studded with what appeared to be the heads of large brass bolts.

"Where to, Sa?" he demanded of the owner, as he suffered it to drop heavily beside my portmanteau.

"Congress Hall," was the reply.

"De best house in town, Sa," he added, in a tone which displayed an utter unconsciousness of having contradicted himself.

"You told me Jones's was the best," I remarked.

"Well, so I did," he replied, coolly; "some say one de best, some toder,—I tink both best,—dat's all."

There was no rebutting this view of the case, so off we started.

Philadelphia goes early to bed, and the streets were lonely and silent, but much better lighted than the portion of the town abutting upon the Delaware. Our course lay up Chestnut-street, the lofty and regular terraces of which frowned gloomily, at that hour, over the narrow thoroughfare.

"Holloa, 23, where are you going?" asked I, as he turned his truck into a street, which led to the right.

"Only up dis turnin' a bit, to Congress Hall," said that sable numeral: "but you needn't wait—dis child follow with de luggage—he knows de way to Jones's by husself, by dis time, I s'pose."

"Yes, but I don't know the way," added I.

"Straight ahead, Sa, and that's Jones's," said he; and he left me to act as I pleased. I made the best use I could of this very definite direction, and dis-

covered the hotel, some distance further up Chestnut-street. It was fully half an hour, however, ere Blackey made his appearance; and, on my remonstrating with him for his delay, he assured me that it was all right, as he had only stopped to converse in the street with a "coloured gen'leman, a friend of his, in the shaving line," who was a "great genias," and "knowed all about de foreign relations." I asked him how he would like to wait half an hour for his pay, to which he replied that he had "no objections, if I would pay de discount for de use of de money."

The city of Philadelphia, perhaps more than any other upon the continent, is marked by characteristics peculiarly American. A European, suddenly transferred to Boston, might mistake his whereabouts, from its crowded, crooked, and intricate appearance. New York, too, is distinguished by but a partial regularity, which is the case with all the growing towns of the Old World. But everywhere in Philadelphia are discernible the same symmetry of outline and regularity of plan. Long, straight streets, each of which is the counterpart of all the rest, and intersecting each other at right angles, with a few small and well wooded squares, will enable the reader to form a tolerably accurate estimate of the town. There is but one short cut that I could discover in all Philadelphia, and that is in the neighbourhood of the Exchange. So unlooked-for an oddity in such a place put me on inquiry; but nobody could tell me how it got there. It is found so useful, however, that many wish it multiplied to an indefinite extent. Distances within the town are measured by blocks,—a block being the square space enclosed between four

streets. The same flaring red brick, which enters into the composition of New York, stares you everywhere in the face, relieved here and there by a marble building, or a terrace, stuccoed and painted to resemble marble. Most of the streets are lined on either side with trees, the boughs of which frequently intermingle above the thoroughfare, and, in the summer time, conceal, by the luxuriance of their foliage, as you look along the vista of the streets, the houses on both sides from your view. This is chiefly confined to the private streets, although some of the busiest thoroughfares are marked by the same arborescent feature. At every intersection of two streets, the country is visible in four different directions, seen as through the diminishing end of a telescope. In one respect it differs from most other American towns; for, with plenty of room to spread in, the streets are equally narrow. With the exception of Market-street, which is very wide, the other streets of Philadelphia scarcely exceed the width of Ludgate-hill. In nothing did the prudent Penn show his foresight more than in this. To make a street wider than is absolutely necessary is a great mistake,—a very wide street, whilst the expense of keeping it in repair is great, being but ill adapted for business purposes,—a fact, in discovering which, Penn seems to have been a couple of centuries in advance of his countrymen. Besides, whether deservedly or not, Philadelphia enjoys the reputation of being the hottest city in the Union, the feature in question greatly contributing, during summer, to the comfort of its inhabitants, the streets lying in one direction, being constantly in shade, which, with the exception of a short period, at noon, may also be said

of those intersecting them. The value of this may be appreciated, when it is understood that, in summer the thermometer sometimes rises to above 100° of Fahrenheit in the shade. It rose to 104° one Sunday that I afterwards spent there, when, if a breath of air swept by, it gave little relief, feeling more like a hot blast than otherwise. On the following day the thermometer ranged at about the same point, when nearly thirty deaths occurred in Philadelphia from strokes of the sun, almost all the victims being labourers, and such as were exposed to its fierce mid-day heat. Horses too, everywhere, dropped dead in the streets; a similar mortality, though to less extent, visiting on the same day the cities of Boston, New York, and Baltimore. It is as a resource against this intense heat that the windows of all the private residences are flanked outside by Venetian blinds, and many of them by solid shutters. Curious enough is the spectacle which a fashionable street in Philadelphia presents from about ten in the morning till five in the evening of a broiling summer's day. It looks quite deserted, the shutters being all closed, so as not only to exclude every particle of light, but also every breath of air; the families melting, in the meantime, in some secluded back room in the more sheltered part of their respective habitations. About the latter mentioned hour, they begin to migrate to the front, when the street presents a new aspect, shutters, windows, doors, and all being now thrown open to catch every breath of the cool evening air. Without this strategy against sun and heat, there would be no living in Philadelphia during the months of July and August. Such of the residents as can add to this the luxury of summer furniture,

exchanging the carpet for a light grass matting, and substituting slim cane-bottomed chairs for those of a heavier calibre, manage, during the period referred to, to eke out a tolerable existence. The same plan, as far as the means of parties will permit, is adopted during the hotter months, throughout the Union; the only mode of keeping a house then comfortable being to close it up for the day, and to open it at night.

Philadelphia abounds in public buildings, some of which, architecturally speaking, are of considerable pretensions. The most striking within the precincts of the town, both as regards appearance, and the associations connected with it, is the old United States Bank. It assumes the form of a Greek temple, with a fine massive portico turned upon Chestnut-street. The whole edifice, which is large, is constructed of marble, and is approached in front by a broad and magnificent flight of marble steps, by which you ascend to the lofty platform, on which it appears to be elevated from the street. It has now a deserted and gloomy look, as if ashamed of the transactions of which it was formerly the scene. The marble steps, once so crowded with busy and scheming multitudes, now echo but to the occasional footsteps of the stranger who is curious enough to ascend them. The carcass is still there, in all its pristine beauty, but the restless, scheming, and unscrupulous soul which once animated it, has fled. I looked upon it and thought of Sidney Smith; and then crowded to my mind recollections of the misery which had been wrought, both in Europe and America, by the injudicious transactions and criminal speculation of the fallen monster. The vaunted "regulator," which was so

beneficially to influence the financial movements of a continent, could not properly control its own; and the institution which was to consolidate business by moderating speculation, became itself the most audacious and the most unfortunate speculator of the time. The Exchange, in which is included the post-office, is a showy building, but merits no very particular attention.

To me the most interesting building of all was the "State House." It is a long pile of red brick, having stone facings, with an open archway through the centre, passing into a small square behind, and surmounted by a quaint-looking cupola, which rises to a considerable elevation. It is situated in Chestnut-street, a little back from the line of the street, having a broad, open, brick pavement in front. Its architectural pretensions are of a very slender order, but its historic recollections are stirring and suggestive. It is one of the few remnants now left in Philadelphia of colonial times. And to what events in the history of humanity did it give birth! Within its walls took place the earliest meetings of the Continental Congress; and, in a small room on the ground floor on your left, as you enter the centre archway, was discussed and adopted the declaration of American independence—the great deed of separation between the mother-country and her tributary continent—a document which, in view of the influence, whether for weal or for woe, which it is yet destined to wield over the fortunes of the human race, is entitled to be regarded as the most remarkable ever penned. It is painful to contrast with the noble race of men which the trying circumstances of their country then called forth, the many degenerate successors who

have since represented them at Washington. The pile which witnessed their steady resolution and anxious deliberations is already more a monument of the past than a thing of present utility, the transference of the state government to Harrisburg having deprived it of its legislative character. But it is not for what it is, but for what it has been, that the Philadelphians justly prize their old "State House."

The principal edifice in the outskirts of the town, and indeed the finest in the whole city, is Girard College, a marble structure, built after the fashion, and of about the same dimensions, as the Madelina in Paris. It is the result of a magnificent bequest made by a wealthy banker of the city, whose name it bears, for the education of poor orphan children, the trustees being strictly enjoined by the will, to erect a plain edifice, and thus economise the funds for the principal object in view; and to prohibit the entrance into the institution, in an official capacity, of any clergyman of any denomination. I believe that in the latter particular they have been faithful to their trust, although as to the former, they contrived to overstep the terms of the will, and, in building a marble palace, have so crippled their resources, that the chief purpose of the testator has been well nigh frustrated. The city and its neighbourhood abound in charitable institutions, some of them established on the most extensive scale, one of which forms, as it were, a small town by itself, on the right bank of the Schuylkill, on the road from Philadelphia to Baltimore.

The street architecture of Philadelphia is of a high order, being much more regular and pleasing in its effect than that of either Boston or New York. The

private residences in the fashionable quarters are large and exceedingly commodious; but such is the sameness in their internal arrangements, that when you have seen one, you have virtually seen all.

For most purposes connected with a great city, the situation of Philadelphia was admirably chosen. Occupying a site more than a hundred miles above the mouth of the Delaware, but yet not beyond the reach of tide-water, and being accessible to ships of the deepest draught and the largest burden, the real capital of Pennsylvania combines all the advantages of a seaport with the safety of an interior town. About four miles below the city, the Schuylkill, after running parallel with it for several miles of its course, turns suddenly to the left, and empties itself into the Delaware. Where the city stands, the distance between the main stream and its tributary is about two miles. One set of streets runs parallel to each other, from stream to stream; the others intersecting them at regular distances, and running parallel to the rivers which flank them. The spot chosen was such as almost necessarily to have suggested this arrangement for the future city. Its greatest length is now in the direction from river to river, the space between them being almost entirely filled up; the town, at the same time, resting on a broad basis on the Delaware, where it is most densely built and its chief business is carried on. Front-street, which looks upon the river, with a broad quay before it, has, in some places, a rather dilapidated look; but in it, as in the two streets immediately behind it, is conducted the chief wholesale business of the town. The streets parallel to the river are named, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and so on; whilst those which stretch from stream to

stream are called after the different kinds of trees abounding in the neighbourhood, such as Chestnut, Pine, Walnut, &c. and by other names, to distinguish them from the numbered streets. In receding from the Delaware, Third-street seems to be the dividing line between the wholesale and the retail business of the town; partaking itself largely of both, and with the exception of Market-street, which is the great retail mart, being the most bustling of any in the city, comprising, as it does, the Exchange, some of the banks, and many of the newspaper offices.

It is to the Schuylkill that Philadelphia is indebted for that superabundant supply of fresh water which ministers so much to the comfort of its inhabitants. Close to the town, a dam is thrown across the river, and by the power thus attained, the Schuylkill is made to pump itself into an enormous reservoir, constructed on the top of a contiguous mound, which goes by the name of Fairmount. It is from this elevation, perhaps, that the best bird's-eye view of Philadelphia is obtained, lying, as it does on a hot July day, like a great flat overbaked brick-field below you. The supply of water, distributed from this reservoir, is inexhaustible; at least, the Philadelphians use it as if it were so. You meet it everywhere, lavished on every purpose, municipal, domestic, and personal. Philadelphia seems to begin each day with a general ablution. On arriving one morning early from the south, I found the streets deluged with water, some recondite plug seeming to have been extracted in front of every house, and the water so squirting and gushing about in all directions, that it was no easy matter to avoid it. Not only were windows, doors, and doorsteps being cleaned, but the

brick pavements themselves came in for their share of scrubbing; and, shortly afterwards, when the sun had dried them, they looked as clean and fresh as if they had just been laid down. In winter, of course, the general bath is less frequently repeated. Nowhere is the utility of this superfluity so perceptible as in the market, so widely and justly celebrated for its cleanliness. And no thanks to it. St. Giles's would itself be clean, if subjected to such an ordeal. The market consists of a long succession of narrow sheds, running down the centre of Market-street, which sheds, at the close of each day's operations, are, one and all of them, copiously visited by the purifying influences of Fairmount.

Nowhere does Philadelphia present the same impetuous activity as New York. It has an orderly and decorous look about it, very much at variance with the turbulent scenes of which it has recently been the witness. It is nevertheless a lively town in its external aspect, and, under a prim surface, conceals a good deal of gaiety. But of society in Philadelphia I shall have occasion hereafter to speak. A mannerism pervades the streets different from any thing witnessed elsewhere. In Chestnut-street, the principal promenade, there is far less jauntiness than in Broadway. Philadelphians, both in dress and manner, are subdued, as compared with their more showy neighbours. But their manner combines grace with quietness; their dress, elegance with simplicity. Catch your Philadelphia belle dress in anything but the richest stuff, but yet she wears it as if the severer attire of her ancestors was constantly before her eyes. They do not discard the fashions, but then they do not worship them with the devotion characteristic of

their sisters on the Hudson. I was seated, one Sunday evening, with a crowd of loungers, on the balcony of the hotel overlooking Chestnut-street, watching the streams of people that passed to and fro, on their way to their respective churches. Not far from me was seated an officer of the army, in conversation with a friend.

"Who, think you," said the former, "was the most flashily dressed man I met to-day?"

"Can't tell," said his friend.

"Why, a corporal in my own company, to be sure," added the officer. "He looked like a blue jay amongst fan-tails."

"Is he a Philadelphian?" inquired the other.

"No," replied the officer, "he's from the 'land of steady habits.'"

"Ah, from Connecticut," said his friend; "he must have passed through Broadway on his way here then."

With this exception, external life in Philadelphia is pretty much what life in New York is. Indeed, so constant and regular is the intercourse now between the two, that it could not be otherwise. Amusements are as varied in the former as in the latter, but the passion for them is not so great. The number of theatres is small in proportion to the population, and it is seldom that they are all open together. The Philadelphians are fond of music, and when a good operatic company make their appearance, they receive them well. They do not dislike the ballet, but they have no enthusiasm for its extravagances. The city abounds with libraries and literary institutions, and to the credit of its inhabitants, most of them are well sustained. There are also many pleasant excursions in the

neighbourhood, to which they resort in the summer time. Steam ferry-boats connect the city every ten minutes with the New Jersey shore of the Delaware. On a summer afternoon, hundreds crowd these boats on their way to the gardens in Camden, a small but scattered town on the other side, and which may be, in fact, regarded as one of the suburbs of the city. Many of those whose business is in Philadelphia reside here, escaping in New Jersey the heavy taxation of overburdened Pennsylvania. In the tea gardens there is a touch of Parisian life; crowds regaling themselves in the open air, beneath the trees, with the multiform drinks of the country.

The Delaware presents a curious contrast in the character of its opposite shore. The Pennsylvanian bank is composed of a heavy impassive clay, which disappears altogether on the New Jersey side, where you encounter a deep fine sand. This contrast is observable from Cape Ann, to the northernmost point of New Jersey upon the river, and is so complete, as to elicit the astonishment of all who witness it. Indeed, nearly the whole state of New Jersey is one great bank of sand, intervening between the Delaware and the Hudson, and the difference alluded to may be accounted for on the supposition of its being a later formation thrown up by the joint action of the sea, and the two great rivers which flank it.

The city is seen to great advantage, when viewed from Camden, on a bright summer day. And with such a view I shall take leave of it for the present. The river is about a mile in width, and the town seems to rise from the water on its opposite shore as abruptly as a sea-wall. Its outline is almost unbroken by a single spire or turret. Down the river

its limit seems to be marked by the navy yard, the sheds of which loom over every object in the level district which surrounds them. Out of these sheds have issued some of the largest ships in the world, and some of the finest in the American service. The district contiguous to them is Southwark, chiefly inhabited by working people. Carrying your eye over the body of the city, you have to your right, some distance up the river, the suburban district of Kensington, of which it is enough to say that it is the Irish quarter of Philadelphia. Farther up still, and terminating the city in that direction, is the port of Richmond, called into existence by the rapid increase of the coal trade. It is easy to distinguish it by the cluster of coasters which are constantly at its wharves. The city too, is in front well lined with shipping, which come close to the shore, as at New York; but as compared with which, Philadelphia as a sea-port is insignificant. It is destined to be more of a manufacturing than a maritime town. Below the town, the river swells into a noble basin, which is frequently studded with shipping. A sail upon the Delaware is a treat; and prominent amongst my most pleasant recollections of America, is my approach by steamer from below to Philadelphia at an early hour on a July morning, when the mists of daybreak, succeeding a dewy night, were rolled away by the rising sun, displaying the river so full and lively, and its banks and islets so fresh and green, and the distant city, yet scarce awake, reposing under a sky without a cloud or a speck to tarnish its deep and lustrous blue.

CHAPTER VIII.

A JOURNEY FROM PHILADELPHIA TO BALTIMORE AND WASHINGTON.

Dangerous Customers.—Delaware.—Wilmington.—Tobacco chewing —A painful Incident.—The Susquehanna.—Canvass-back Ducks —The Suburb of Canton.—Baltimore.—Position and Trade.— Baltimore Beauties.—Departure for Washington.—A slight Accident.—Arrival in the Capital.—Fellow-Travellers.

ABOUT a hundred miles of railway connect Baltimore with Philadelphia, the petty State of Delaware being crossed by the road uniting the capital of Maryland with that of Pennsylvania. In its application to both places, I use the word "capital" in its virtual signification, not in its political sense; Harrisburg being, as already mentioned, in the latter point of view, the capital of Pennsylvania, whilst that of Maryland is an insignificant town on the Chesapeake, called Annapolis.

For two miles out of Philadelphia you are drawn, at an exciting trot, by a number of horses. Emerging from a small cramped station in Market-street you proceed along a number of streets, the carriages being so constructed as to enable them, without diminishing speed, to be whipped round the rectangular corners formed by the intersections of the streets with perfect safety. In quitting Philadelphia,

you leave it quite as suddenly as you enter it. It is not, like most large towns, surrounded, on its land sides, by long straggling suburbs. It seems everywhere to begin and to end all at once. At one moment you seem to be in the midst of a densely built district, at the next you are as completely in the country, as if the neighbourhood of the town was all an illusion. A curious effect has this abrupt transition, being something like that which would be produced upon a cockney, if he were lifted from Cheapside and let down instantly on Wimbledon-common. One likes to see the straggling adjuncts of a town accompany him some way into the country. Philadelphia may have a good deal of the *rus in urbe*, but it has none of the *urbs in rure;* and in quitting it, you feel as if you had taken leave of a friend, without being shown to the door.

You have to cross the Schuylkill by a long covered bridge, ere you succeed in your search for a locomotive. This civic proscription of railway engines may appear very unreasonable to us, but it is a very necessary piece of municipal policy in America, where every town ranks amongst its more prominent qualities a very high degree of inflammability. With us, locomotives are fed on nothing but coke; in America they devour nothing but wood; and, like a horse kept exclusively upon oats, the latter are difficult to manage, from the nature of their diet. They are constantly attended by a formidable train of obdurate sparks, and sometimes amuse themselves on the way by setting fire to a barn, a hayrick, and the like, and, when they have nothing else to do, burning down a fence. Such customers would soon make Philadelphia too hot for them, and therefore their

exclusion; the corporation having a sufficient number of turbulent spirits already to deal with, without the admission of those who would be sure to excite a flame.

Shortly after passing Chester, the last station in Pennsylvania, you enter the State of Delaware, somewhat larger in area than Middlesex, and with a population in number a little more than half that of the parish of Marylebone. Estimating its resources in 1776 from their present development, it did a bold thing to rebel in that memorable year, and may have been bullied into the act by its bigger brothers and sisters. I amused myself for some time trying to calculate the infinitesimally small chance it would have of subsisting for a single lustrum, as an independent constitutional entity on the continent of Europe. Providence has luckily placed it where it can hold its head as high as any of its neighbours, and it sometimes holds very saucy language to the "great powers" around it. Comparatively weak as it is, it has contrived to secure, in one branch of the federal legislature at least, as good a footing and as potent a voice as New York, which is twenty times its size, with nearly thirty times its population. This microscopic State, however, has managed to do that which more puissant sovereignties have ever been unequal to—it has kept clear of debt. Side by side with Pennsylvania, it affords a notable instance of prudence in juxtaposition with prodigality; the one being in a state of chronic struggle to sustain its reputation, the other scarcely knowing what to do with its revenue, although it makes a very large hole in its annual receipts for such laudable purposes as education. Delaware had, at one time, a geographical

importance, of which the construction of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Railway has gone far to deprive it. Situated between the estuary of the Delaware and the head of Chesapeake Bay, it interposes, at one point, a breadth of only sixteen miles between them. This made it an important link in the then direct communication with the South. A canal, of sufficient dimensions to admit of the passage of steamers, was constructed from Newcastle to the Chesapeake, by means of which an unbroken steamboat communication was opened between Philadelphia and Baltimore. A railway has since been laid down parallel to this canal, many persons preferring this route between the two cities in the summer time, the sail from Baltimore to Frenchtown, along the head of Chesapeake Bay, being only equalled in beauty by that, after crossing the neck of land by railway, from Newcastle to Philadelphia, by the Delaware.

Though few in number, the people of Delaware are not wanting in spirit and enterprise. They boast of a foreign trade, and do "a good stroke of business" with their immediate neighbours. They manufacture also to a small extent, and have in Newcastle a large locomotive establishment, where many of the engines used throughout the Union are fabricated. On the Brandywine, or the Brandy and Water, as it is sometimes called, are some of the largest "flouring mills" in the United States. But one has scarcely time to reflect upon the manifold elements which enter into the sum-total of the importance of Delaware, when he finds himself alongside of Wilmington, its capital. There is a refreshment-room here in connexion with the station, which is the open street;

and on my asking for a cup of coffee, I was presented with a decoction of parched peas, to which, being amongst the acquired tastes, I had not sufficient time to reconcile myself. Here, however, was afforded one undeniable proof, that political excitements do not always depend, for their extent, upon the importance of the interests at stake. A political meeting had been held that day in town, connected with some local election, and the refreshment-room was then the scene of a species of adjourned meeting of some of those who had attended. The noise and uproar were tremendous, and the warmth with which the merits of this, that, and the other candidate were canvassed, made me think for a moment that the interests of the Union, if not those of foreign states, were involved. I soon discovered that there were two sorts of candidates, the "winning horses" and the "gone geese," the majority backing the former, but a few exhibiting an obdurate sympathy for the more questionable form of animal, and that too when it was obvious from the epithet applied to them, that they had taken their departure from the field. Politics in America exhibit everywhere the same agitated aspect. I have seen New York convulsed with an electoral contest, and Delaware shaken to its little centre with the same, and could not but think of the story of the fly and the bull, when in their public assemblies I have heard the people of the latter emphatically assured by their orators, that the eyes of the world were upon them.

A journey by railway south of Philadelphia, and, indeed, south of the Hudson, has many things about it that are disagreeable to the stranger. It is then that he is brought in close contact with tobacco-

chewing, to an extent that is positively disgusting. If previously unaware of the existence of this depravity of taste, he might fancy, seeing a number of men with their respective jaws constantly in motion, that they belonged to the race of animals chewing the cud—with the expectoral accompaniment as a slight modification of the practice. Nowhere is this disgusting habit so essentially annoying, as in a railway carriage. In the open street it is possible to avoid the nuisance, as it is in a public room, such as a bar-room, by giving a wide berth to the spittoons; but in a railway carriage there is no escaping it. Think of being cooped up in a small compartment, with no vacant space but the narrow aisle in the centre, with nine-and-fifty distillers of tobacco-juice around you! The constant spitting which takes place from the moment that the passengers take their seats, is carried on to so formidable an extent, that scarcely five minutes elapse before the floor is absolutely moist with it. I once ventured to walk from one end of the carriage to the other, and got such a fright, from the many perils I encountered, that I never afterwards subjected myself to a similar risk. On leaving Wilmington I found myself seated beside a man who carried on his knee what appeared to be, from the care he took of it, a large picture, framed and glazed, and which was enveloped for protection in some stout canvass; it not only covered his own knees, but partially mine also. I observed him cram his mouth full of tobacco when I took my seat, and we had been but a few minutes together, when he turned round to me and said—

"Stranger, will you let me spit?"

I told him that I could have no objection to

his so indulging himself, so long as he did not spit on me.

"That's just," said he, "what I didn't ambition to do; but you see, with this 'ere thing that I'm a carryin', unless you spread out your feet a bit, I have no place to do it in."

"If that's all," I replied, "I'll exceed your wishes by giving you the whole place to yourself;" whereupon I left him, and sought the platform, preferring the cold, but fresh air, to the deleterious fumes within the car, and to having my neighbour coolly deposit his filthy expectorations between my knees.

Both in New England and in New York tobacco-chewing is a habit by far too prevalent; but to the stranger, this plague in American life only begins to show itself in its detestable universality after he has crossed the Hudson, on his way to the South. A New York railway carriage is a clean affair, as compared with one on the line between Philadelphia and Baltimore, or, more particularly, between the latter and the termination of railway travelling in North Carolina. The floor is regularly incrusted with its daily succession of abominable deposits; so much so, that one might almost smoke a pipe from its scrapings. It too frequently happens, also, that the seats, the sides of the car, the window hangings, where there are any, and sometimes the windows themselves, are stained with this pestiferous decoction. I was once on my way from Baltimore to Washington, when two men got in at the half-way station, somewhat the worse for liquor, and the first thing that one of them did on seating himself, was to take out his quid, and trace his initials with it upon the window, surrounding them afterwards with a framework of flourishes;

conduct which seemed to excite but little disgust, many near him laughing, but only regarding it as one of the stupid things that men "a little sprung" would sometimes do.

Let it not be said that this is only joining in a hacknied cry, or falling readily in with a common prejudice. I confidently appeal to every candid American who has ever travelled southward, for a corroboration of my assertion, that it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the extent to which this disgusting habit is carried in the southern and middle States, but particularly the former. Many travellers however have, unwittingly I dare say, conveyed a false impression, when they have left their readers to suppose that it is a habit indiscriminately practised under all circumstances. It has not been permitted to invade the sanctuary of private society. Men may chew in the streets, in bar-rooms, on board steamboats, in railway cars, in short, in all public places, not even excepting the halls of legislation, but I never yet saw any one, in the presence of ladies, violate with the practice the decorum of a drawing-room. But little do the ladies know the agony to which their admirers sometimes subject themselves by this bit of gallant self-denial. "Oh! for a chew;" whispered on one occasion, under these circumstances, into my ear, a young man, in tones indicative of the deepest distress. I advised him, if he were in any pain, to step into the next room, and take one; but he shook his head despondingly, saying that "they (the ladies) would smell it on my breath." About an hour afterwards I left with him, and his first exclamation on gaining the street was, "Thank God! I can now use my box." To say that gentlemen chew in society in America, is

quite as great a calumny as to say that the ladies smoke; but that, with this exception, America is grinding at tobacco from morning till night, is what no American will dispute; and there are many in the United States in whom the habit excites as much disgust as it can do in any European.

It was between Philadelphia and Baltimore that I first witnessed for myself the extent to which the Anglo-Americans carry their antipathy to the coloured race. At one end of the car in which I was seated sat a young man, very respectably dressed, but who bore in his countenance those traces, almost indelible, which, long after every symptom of the colour has vanished, bespeak the presence of African blood in the veins. The quantity which he possessed, could not have been more than 12½ per cent. of his whole blood, tinging his skin with a shade, just visible, and no more. If his face was not as white, it was, at all events, cleaner than those of many around him. I observed that he became very uneasy every time the conductor came into the car, eyeing him with timid glances, as if in fear of him. Divining the cause of this conduct, I determined to watch the issue, which was not long delayed. By-and-by, the conductor entered the car again, and, as if he had come for the purpose, walked straight up to the poor wretch in question, and, without deigning to speak to him, ordered him out with a wave of his finger. The blood in a moment mounted to his temples, and suffused his whole face; but resistance was vain; and with a hanging head, and broken-hearted look, he left the carriage. He was not a slave; but not a soul remonstrated, not a whisper was heard in his behalf. The silence of all indicated their

approval of this petty manifestation of the tyranny of blood. These bold defenders of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," these chivalrous assertors of the Declaration of Independence, looked with utter indifference on this practical violation of the "rights of man."

"Sarved the d—d nigger right," said a youngster scarcely twenty, at the other end of the car, and those immediately around him laughed at the remark.

"He'll know his place better the next time, the b——y mongrel!" said another; and the laugh was repeated.

Curious to know what had been done with him, I sought the conductor, whom I found returning from the front part of the train.

"Blow me," said he, "if you can't reg'late a thousand of your out-and-out onpretendin' niggers much more easier than one of these composition gentry: they think because they have got a little whitewash on their ugly mugs, that they're the real china, and no mistake."

"But where have you put him?" I asked; "he surely can't ride on the engine?"

"Put him?—in the nigger crib, to be sure, where he should be," said he.

"Can I see it?" I inquired.

"You can, if you have a taste that way," he replied; "keep on ahead, straight through the baggage van, and you'll see them all alive."

I did as directed, until at length I passed through the van in which the luggage was stowed, and between which and the tender was a cold, comfortless-looking box, with a few hard, uncovered seats, which were

occupied by about a dozen negroes. There they were by themselves, of both sexes, and of almost all ages, some of them silent and sullen, others jabbering like so many monkeys, and laughing immoderately —but all looking equally stolid when their features were at rest. One of them, a woman, had a child in her arms, which she pressed close to her breast to keep it warm; for though the day was bitter cold, there was no stove in the comfortless "crib." Here I found the poor outcast who had so excited my sympathies; he was seated by himself in a corner, with a gloomy and vengeful expression, and regarded me with a scowl, as if I had been a willing party to his humiliation. His entrance had afforded considerable merriment to the negroes, who rather rejoiced, than otherwise, at the treatment he had received. Nothing can be more deplorable than the position, or rather the un-position, of the mixed race in America. Between the negro and the white man there is an impassable gulf, each having his determinate place; but the mulatto, or rather the mixed race beyond the mulatto in the quantity of white blood, are buffeted between the two; for whilst they are not good enough company for the white man, they elicit no sympathy from the black, who charges them with affecting to be too good company for him. It is but justice, however, here to say, that I afterwards traversed the whole State of New York in a railway carriage, in which were seated a respectable negro and his wife, neither of whom was molested, although the carriage was crowded, during the journey.

This feeling the Americans, and more particularly the southerners, carry with them on their travels. It is but a short time ago since the captain of a British

steamboat, plying on Lake Ontario, unwarrantably lent himself to this prejudice in favour of a party of Virginians, who had taken passage with him from Toronto to Kingston. There was a young coloured man on board, highly educated, and well known to the white as to the negro population of the province, who had taken a cabin berth, paid his fare, and received a receipt for the money. At dinner, he appeared near the foot of the table, the party in question being seated at the top. Seeing him, they rose and were about to leave the cabin, when the captain stopped them. They informed him that they could not sit at table with a black man; to which the captain most improperly replied, that they need not leave, as he would order him away. But he was not to be ordered away—maintaining his right to sit there with the best of them—whereupon the captain took hold of him by the collar, and threatened force. Against this conduct the rest of the passengers loudly remonstrated; but the young man, finding himself actually assaulted, rose, and left the table. The Virginians, thereupon, dined in peace. But, on arriving at Kingston, the captain was apprehended on a warrant for the assault, and had to pay a heavy fine for his officiousness,—the press of the province being unanimous in its condemnation of his conduct, and his command being only continued to him on condition of his not offending in a similar manner in future.

But whilst I have been thus digressing, the train has been speeding at the rate of twenty miles an hour, over a very fertile and slightly undulating country, and has, at length, arrived at the left bank of the Susquehanna. Here the river, before entering

the Chesapeake, expands into a broad and imposing estuary, across which the passengers are conveyed by steamboat, the upper deck of which is so contrived, that the baggage vans can be wheeled upon it, and wheeled off again, to join the train at the other side, without disturbing their contents. The landing-place, on the southern bank, is at the town of Havre de Grace, which was a witness to some of the naval evolutions of the late war. It is very prettily situated on a high sloping bank, and commands a noble prospect, both of land and water. During the proper season, this estuary is visited by myriads of canvass-back ducks, compared to which, for flavour and delicacy, the wild duck of Europe is not worth a thought. I have seen the Susquehanna blackened with them for miles, as also the Gunpowder Creek, the estuary of which is a little further on, and, being shallow, is crossed by a long low bridge, built upon piles, of sufficient width to receive a single line of rails.

There are few towns in America but present some monuments of gigantic but unfortunate speculation. Baltimore is no exception, for, on entering it from the north, you pass through the suburb of Canton, a melancholy instance of misguided enterprise. The streets are all nicely laid out, paved, and macadamized; you have everything there to make a fine town but the houses. A few have been built, apparently as decoy ducks to others, but to no purpose. An American Canton would not rise on the banks of the Patapsco, and "Canton lots" rapidly sunk in the market.

It had never been my lot to encounter such a hubbub as saluted us on entering the station in Baltimore: it was like Pandemonium let loose. There

was not an hotel in town but was represented by one or two negroes, who did the touting for it, each having the name of his boniface displayed on a band which surrounded his hat.

"Barnum's, gen'lemen—Barnum's—now for Barnum's—only house in town—rest all sham—skin but no 'possum—yhaw, yhaw—Barnum's, Barnum's!"

"Cause Eagle eaten all de 'possum up, and left nuffin but de skin—de Eagle's de house, gen'lemen—hurra for de Eagle!" This was said by another.

"Get out, you brack man," said the representative of Barnum's, himself the blacker of the two; "tell your massa to send a gen'leman next time, will you—it's lowerin' to de profession to hab you here—get out.—Barnum's, gen'lemen—Barnum's!"

Having been recommended to Barnum's, I consigned myself to his lieutenant, who told me that I had some "'scrimination" in listening to him, instead of to that "onmannerly and dispectful nigger," his rival of the Eagle. I found the hotel all that it had been described to be, being in fact one of the most admirably managed establishments of the kind on the continent.

Baltimore is most advantageously situated, a few miles above the entrance of the Patapsco into Chesapeake Bay. It has an excellent harbour, which is constantly crowded with shipping, the Baltimore clipper, "built to beat everything that carries rags," being conspicuous amongst the rest. The foreign trade of Baltimore is large, and its communication with the interior great and daily increasing,—the Baltimore and Ohio railway opening up a direct and rapid communication between it and the great West. The portion of the town which adjoins the harbour is dirty and unattractive enough, but as you recede

from the wharves, and gain more elevated ground, its aspect improves very much, the streets being spacious, and regularly laid out—well-paved, and tastefully built. Baltimore-street, its principal thoroughfare, is one of the finest streets in the Union.

In one respect, Baltimore enjoys a very enviable, in another a very invidious, reputation. It is said to be full of pretty women, a "Baltimore beauty" being a sort of proverbial expression. I can say, from personal observation, that, in so large a population, I never saw so small a proportion of unattractive faces. Indeed, this characteristic of Baltimore extends more or less to the whole State of Maryland. The women excel in figure as well as in face, the former being more rounded than in other parts of the Union, New England excepted; but it has a springiness and flexibility about it, to which that of the beauty of the north-east is a stranger. If it contains a greater number of beauties, it also gets credit for containing a greater number of blackguards, for its population, than any other city in the Union. The Mexican war has cleared many of them off, since the breaking out of which, I understand that the police force of the town has been materially reduced.

Baltimore is the chief seat of Catholicism in the United States. It contains a large cathedral, built at great cost, plain enough externally, but very sumptuously adorned in the interior. The State has, to some extent, retained the Catholic character which marked its early settlement. The original settlers were Catholics, and were amongst the first of the colonists to promulgate the principle of religious toleration; for which liberality they were afterwards nobly repaid by disabilities imposed upon them by their Protestant brethren, as soon as they obtained the ascendancy.

Baltimore is affectedly called the "monumental city." Its monuments consist of a pillar, raised to General Washington, of a piece with Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square; and a small erection, the body of which, resting upon a low pedestal, represents the "bundle of sticks," typical of union in the fable, raised to the memory of some local patriots, who did good service to their country in the late war.

It was here that, like most European travellers on the same route, I found myself, for the first time, waited upon by slaves. It is no mawkish sentiment, but a genuine feeling of repugnance, with which an Englishman submits, for the first time, to the good offices of unrewarded service. A friend from Canada was travelling with me, who felt in unison with myself. The poor creatures themselves seemed to suspect our sympathy, and waited upon us with an alacrity which they did not show in attending to our fellow-passengers. On leaving, we gave each a small gratuity, which they received with a mixture of wonder and timidity. It may be to my shame that I confess it, but the truth is, that I soon became accustomed to this order of things, and received the services of a slave with the same indifference as if they had been those of a hired servant. Custom is, generally speaking, more than a match for the finest sensibilities.

I mentioned this circumstance once to a Virginian lady, resident in Washington. Brought up as she was, from the very cradle, in the midst of slaves, it was, she said, with an awkward feeling that she received, for the first time, the services of a white waiting-woman—yielding sometimes to an impulse which led her to apologize for troubling her; and every now and then detecting herself calling her

"Miss." How much, after all, are we, even in our best feelings, the creatures of circumstance!

I left Baltimore by the late night-train for Washington. For two-thirds of the way, we went on smoothly enough; but when within about ten miles of Washington, a violent jerk to the whole train apprised us that we had run against something, not, however, sufficiently formidable to bring us to a sudden halt, or to dislodge us from the line. The engine-driver gradually slackened speed, and on stopping the train, we discovered that we had run against a cow, which had been lying on the line.

"Sure on't," said the driver, as soon as he had satisfied his curiosity.

"You seem familiar with such accidents," I observed; "are they frequent?"

"Now and then of a night," said he, "we do run agin somethin' of the kind, but they gin'rally manage to get the worst on't."

"But do they never throw you off the rail?" I inquired.

"They seem to take a pleasure in doin' it, when they find us without the 'cow-ketcher,'" he replied.

On walking to the front of the engine, I discovered what the "cow-ketcher" was. Utterly unprotected, as American railways are, either by fences or police, the presence of this device is a very necessary precaution in the case of all night-trains. It is appended to the front of the locomotive, and consists of a strong iron grating, turned up a little at the projecting points, which is made to trail along the line a few inches from the rails. It is by no means uncommon, on arriving at a station, to find a sheep or a hog dead or dying in it. A cow or a horse is too formidable

an obstacle to be run against without being observed. On this occasion, the unfortunate cow was lifted off the rail, on which it had been lying, but its body was frightfully lacerated by the process.

"I can stand a hog, but them 'ere cows are the devil to pay," said the stoker, as he proceeded, with the help of some others, to drag the carcass off the machine, and deposit it by the side of the line.

"Might they not as well take it into Washington now?" I observed to one of the bystanders.

"I suppose they would," said he, "but that they want to leave room for the next;" a remark which enabled me certainly to resume my place, with a very comfortable feeling of security.

It was two in the morning ere we reached Washington. The night was cloudy and dark, and as we approached the town, the outline of the Capitol was barely discernible, on our left, looming up against the dull heavy sky. A more miserable station than we were ushered into can scarcely be conceived. We were but few passengers, and there we stood shivering by the light of one wretched lamp, upon the cold moist platform, whilst our baggage was being distributed. I turned and looked at two of my fellow-unfortunates who stood by me. Their faces were familiar to me, but seen then under circumstances how different from those in which I had last witnessed them, when, amid the glare of footlights and all the scenic trickery of the stage, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean acted their parts with *éclat* before a brilliant London audience! They were now in America, on their way south, in fulfilment of an engagement.

There was but one hotel in which room was to be had, and that was at the other end of the town. I

was conveyed to it in a carriage, which seemed to traverse a dark avenue, in which neither a light nor a house was visible. Thinking that he had taken a circuitous way by the outskirts, I was surprised when the driver told me that we had "come right through the town," his course having been "straight down Pennsylvania-avenue," from the station. I conceived a gloomy idea of Washington from the nocturnal aspect, or rather want of aspect, of its main thoroughfare. In the darkness I could see no trace whatever of a town, the hotel, in which I was to take up my quarters, having more the appearance of a road-side inn than anything else. The cold wintry wind whistled through the high leafless trees, with which it was flanked, and the solitary lamp which burned over the door, only made darkness visible, there being no trace of another habitation to be seen on any side.

I got a fire lighted in my room, and went immediately to bed. I slept uncomfortably, and awoke about ten next morning, feverish and unrefreshed. Before recovering complete consciousness, I lay for some time in a state of semi-stupor, with my eyes half open, and rivetted upon what appeared to me to be some huge glowing object, which pained them, but which, at the same time, had such a fascination about it as kept my look fixed upon it. I involuntarily connected it with the uneasy state in which I felt my whole frame to be. It seemed as if the whole of the sun's light was being concentrated by a gigantic lens, and thrown thus intensified upon my brain. On my becoming fairly awake, it turned out to be neither more nor less than the anthracite fire, which burnt smokeless and flameless in my grate, and which looked like one mass of iron glowing at a white heat. For

seven hours it had been thus steadily burning, apparently without diminution. The heat which it threw out was so intense and so dry, that my skin, under its influence, seemed to crackle like parchment. This I afterwards found to be the great objection to anthracite coal in its application to domestic purposes. Admirably adapted for smelting, it throws but an unwholesome heat into a room, drying up all the juices in the body, warping every piece of furniture within its reach, and finding some moisture to extract even from the best seasoned timber. It requires a peculiar construction of grate to burn well in; and unless provided in this way to its taste, will soon eat up the bars of an ordinary one. It has a slaty uninflammable appearance, but is nevertheless highly combustible, soon lighting, and burning for a long time. Its want of flame and smoke would send gladness to the heart of Mr. Mackinnon.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAPITAL AND THE CAPITOL.

Bird's-eye View of Washington.—The Plan and the Execution.—Stroll through the Town.—Public Buildings.—The City Hall.—The Post-Office.—The Treasury.—The Executive Mansion and its adjuncts.—The Capitol.—A strong Contrast.

To convey to the mind of the reader anything like an adequate idea of Washington, is no easy task. It so violates one's preconceived notions of a capital, and is, in its general features, so much at variance with the estimate which one forms of the metropolitan proprieties, that it is difficult, in dealing with it as a capital, to avoid caricaturing a respectable country town. It is as unique in its physical character as it is in its political position, answering all its purposes, yet at the same time falling far short of its expectations.

Washington presents itself in two distinct aspects, one comprising that which it is, and the other that which it was to be. The difference between the intention and the reality is great indeed, and can only be appreciated by viewing the city from some point, from which both design and execution can be estimated together. The point in every way most favour-

able in this respect, is the dome of the Capitol; and, with the reader's consent, we will ascend it together, and take a bird's-eye view of Washington.

The view from this elevated point is extensive, and in some respects pleasantly varied. The whole of the district of Columbia is within the range of your vision, with a considerable expanse of the circumjacent States of Maryland and Virginia. You have water, town, and field at your feet, with long stretches of forest beyond, and hazy wooded slopes in the distance.

Both the site and the plan of Washington are beneath you, as if delineated on a gigantic map. The ground upon which the city is laid out is on the north bank of the Potomac, at the head of tide-water, and about 120 miles from Chesapeake Bay. On the noble estuary of that river the southern side of the city rests, being flanked on the eastern side by a broad and deep creek, called the East Branch. In a northern or western direction, there are no particular marks to designate its limits. If the design of its founders was too grand for realization, it was because of its being incommensurate with the wants of the locality. In a commercial point of view it is a superfluity, and politically and socially speaking, it is not that powerful magnet which, like the centralizing capitals of the old world, can draw to itself the wealth and fashion of the country. In that on which they chiefly relied for its future greatness, its projectors committed a capital blunder. There are too many social and political centres in the United States for the presence of the federal government to command at Washington a monopoly of the wealth, the talent, and the fashion of the country; too many foci of

commercial action around it, to admit of the forced growth of a large community, in a country where such communities can only as it were spontaneously arise.

The Capitol was very appropriately selected as the centre of the whole plan. From it was to radiate magnificent avenues, of indefinite length in some directions, and of an almost fabulous width in all. Having secured this great frame-work, it was easy to fill up the rest of the diagram. In these avenues all the side streets were to begin and terminate; the whole being conceived pretty much on the plan of an out-door spider's web, with its beautiful radiations and intervening parallels. Some of these avenues are laid out and can be traced, from a variety of marks, by the eye, others having, as yet, no definite existence but in the intellect of the surveyor. The avenues, being designed as the great thoroughfares, were to be called after the different States of the Union,—a very appropriate starting point for the nomenclature of the capital,—the same idea being carried out in the navy, the different States giving their names to the ships of the line. From the direction of the East Branch to Georgetown, one avenue was laid out, extending for about three miles, broken only in two places by the grounds of the Capitol and those of the President's house. This is in the main line of the town, and nearly one-half of it is covered with grass.

Such being the plan of Washington, what has been the execution? The main body of the town lies to the west of the Capitol, on low ground, completely overlooked by the elevated plateau, on the slope of which that pile is built. The basis of this part of

the town is Pennsylvania-avenue, running almost from your feet, a broad straight course for a full mile, until it terminates in the grounds of the President's house, built upon a similar though a less elevation than the Capitol. On the north this avenue is flanked by a low ridge, which the city completely covers, streets running along it parallel to the avenue, and others intersecting them at right angles. In this direction, and in this only, has the city anything like a town look about it. In every other direction, you have nothing but incipient country villages, with here and there a few scattered houses of wood or brick, as the case may be, and ever and anon a street just begun and then stopped, as if it were afraid to proceed any further into the wilderness. Taking a rapid glance at the whole, plan and execution considered, it reminds one of an unfinished piece of lady's needlework, with a patch here and there resting upon the canvass, the whole enabling one to form an idea, and no more, of the general design. Let us now descend, and take a short stroll through the town.

We emerge from the grounds of the Capitol upon Pennsylvania-avenue, which originally consisted of two rows of houses and four rows of trees. The latter are now reduced to two, which, when the trees have attained their growth, will throw a grateful shade upon the thoroughfare. The first feature about the avenue that strikes you, is its amazing width. The houses visible on the opposite side, are three hundred feet distant from you, enough to destroy all community of interest and feeling between them, if houses had either one or the other. There seems, in fact, to be little or no bond of union between them; and instead of looking like the two sides of one and

the same street, they seem as if they were each a side of two different streets. The mistake of this prodigality of surface was discovered too late to be remedied. In the first place, it destroys the symmetry of the street; for, to be well-proportioned, the houses on either side should rise to a height of twenty stories at least, whereas they are, generally speaking, only three. In the next place, the cost of keeping it in order is ruinous; and as Pennsylvania-avenue is the Broadway of Washington, all the other streets are beggared for the sake of the pet. To pave it was like attempting to pave a field—a circumstance to which is attributable the fact, that the rest of the streets, with the exception of their broad ample brick footways, are left unpaved. In wet weather, to cross any of them, even Pennsylvania-avenue, is a hazardous matter. Nobody ever crosses them for pleasure. It requires serious business to drag you from one side to the other.

Turning from the Avenue to the right, we have at the top of the street, which we thus enter, a large unfinished brick building, with the holes occasioned by the scaffolding yet in the walls, and with a liberty pole rising to the very clouds in front of it. This is the City Hall, the funds for building which were raised by a lottery; but some one decamping with a portion of them, the building, which was founded in chance, runs a chance of never being completed. Continuing almost in the same line to the westward, we come to the General Post Office, the choicest architectural *bijou* in Washington, being a neat classic structure built of white marble, and about the size of the Trinity House. Its beauties are, however, almost lost from defect of site, the fate of so many of our

own finest public edifices. Immediately to the north of the Post Office is the Patent Office, an imposing pile, with a massive Doric portico in the centre, approached by a broad and lofty flight of steps. But one quarter of it is, as yet, built; the design consisting of four similar fronts, which will enclose a hollow square. Farther west, and at the end of the nearest parallel street to Pennsylvania-avenue, is the Treasury, a handsome building, the front of which presents one of the finest, as it is certainly one of the longest, colonnades in the world. But this brings us to the Executive mansion and its adjuncts.

In the midst of a large open square, on a piece of high ground overlooking the Potomac, though about a quarter of a mile back from it, is the President's House, or the "White House," as it is more generally called. It is a spacious and elegant mansion, surrounded by soft sloping lawns, shaded by lofty trees and dotted with shrubbery. Within this square, and forming, as it were, its four angles, are the four departments of State, those of the Treasury, of State, of War, and of the Navy, each of which is approached by the public from one of the four streets which encompass the Executive grounds. To each a private path also leads from the President's house, the chief magistrate sitting, as it were, like a spider, in the centre of his web, from which he constantly overlooks the occurrences at its extremities. With the exception of the Treasury, which is new, the departments are plain brick buildings, painted in singular taste, of a sort of diluted sky-blue colour.

With the exception of the Capitol, to which I shall presently advert, this list comprises the only architectural features worthy of notice in the general view of

Washington. Separated, as they are, at great distances from each other, their effect is entirely lost. On my once suggesting to a resident, that it would have been much better had they all been placed together, so as to have formed a noble square, which, viewed as a centre, would have imparted a unity to one's idea of the town; he told me that they all now deeply regretted that this had not been the case, the only reason assigned for scattering them being to prevent the different heads of departments from being constantly disturbed by the intrusion of members of Congress. As they are, Washington has no visible centre—no one point upon which converge the ideas of its inhabitants. But let us back again to the Capitol.

It is a thousand pities that its front is not turned upon Pennsylvania-avenue. The city being intended to grow the other way, the front of the Capitol was turned to the east; but the town having taken the contrary direction, the legislative palace has the appearance of turning its back upon it. But notwithstanding this, it has a most imposing effect, rising, as it does, in classic elegance from its lofty site, over the greensward and rich embowering foliage of the low grounds at its base. As seen at one end of the Avenue, from the grounds of the President's house at the other, there are few buildings in the world that can look to better advantage. I have seen it when its milk-white walls were swathed in moonlight, and when, as viewed from amid the fountains and shrubbery which encircle it, it looked more like a creation of fairy-land than a substantial reality. Passing to the high ground, on its eastern side, we have its principal front, the chief feature of which is

a deep Corinthian portico, approached by a double flight of steps, and from which seems to spring the lofty dome, which crowns the building, and gives solidity to the whole, by uniting it, as it were, in one compact mass. This elevation is well seen from the spacious esplanade in front, and from the ornamental grounds immediately beyond. The stairs leading to the portico are flanked by pedestals, designed for groups of statuary, one of which only is as yet occupied by a marble group, representing Columbus holding a globe in his extended right hand, with an aboriginal native of the new world, a female figure, crouching beside him in mingled fear and admiration. The execution of this group is much better than its design, which is ridiculously theatric. Ascending the steps, you have, beneath the portico, in a niche on either side of the door leading into the body of the building, a marble figure of Peace and War. Passing through this door, you are ushered at once into the rotunda, surmounted by, and lighted from the dome. It extends the whole width of the main building, the perpendicular part of its walls being divided into large panels, designed for the reception of historic paintings. Most of these are already filled, chiefly with incidents in the revolutionary struggle; whilst those still empty will, no doubt, soon be occupied by representations of some of the more prominent events of the Mexican war. Turning to the left, on entering the rotunda, you pass through a door which leads to the House of Representatives, an enormous semicircular chamber, with a lofty vaulted roof resembling, on the whole, the bisection of a dome. A row of massive and lofty pillars, composed of a kind of "pudding stone," which takes a polish equal to that of marble,

spring from the floor, and form an inner arc to the outer one formed by the circular wall of the chamber. Between the pillars and this wall is the strangers' gallery. The speaker's chair occupies, as it were, the centre of the chord of the arc, being immediately in front of a screen of smaller pillars, supporting another gallery, occupying a deep recess in the wall, and which is set apart for such private friends as members choose to introduce into it. The seats of members radiate from the chair back to the great pillars, leaving an open semicircular space immediately in front of the clerk's table. The hall looks well, but is ill-adapted for its purpose, it being far too large to speak in with comfort, in addition to which, its acoustic arrangements are anything but perfect.

To get to the senate chamber you have to cross the rotunda. Its general outline is, in most respects, similar to that of the House of Representatives, differing from it in this, that it is not above one-third the size. It is lighter, neater, and much better in its effect than its rival chamber in the other wing of the Capitol; and is, in every way, admirably adapted for public speaking. It is also provided with galleries for the public, seats being raised around the body of the chamber for the diplomatic corps, the judges, and such members of the government as choose to be witnesses of the deliberations of the Senate.

Ascending one day to the gallery, I witnessed a sight which brought into painful contrast some of the lights and shadows of American life. Crouched at the top of the dark staircase was an object, the precise form and character of which I did not at first comprehend; nor was it until my eye had adjusted itself

to the imperfect light, that I discovered it to be an aged negro, his hair partially whitened with years, and his fingers crooked with toil. Near him was the door leading into the gallery. It was slightly ajar. The ceiling of the chamber was visible to him, and the voices of the speakers came audibly from within. Some one was then addressing the house. I listened and recognised the tones of one of the representatives of Virginia, the great breeder of slaves, dogmatizing upon abstract rights and constitutional privileges. What a commentary was that poor wretch upon his language! To think that such words should fall upon such ears; the freeman speaking, the slave listening, and all within the very sanctuary of the constitution. I entered the chamber, and could not help, during all the time that I remained there, seeing in fancy that decrepit old slave kneeling at the foot of the chair in impotent supplication for justice.

Immediately after the house had risen, I perceived him busy with others cleaning out the chamber. Indeed, during the session, the whole Capitol is daily swept by negroes; the black man cleaning what the white man defiles. Who will erase the moral stain that casts such a shadow over the republic? Will the white man have the magnanimity to do it; or will the black man have to purify the constitution for himself, as he now sweeps the dust of his oppressor from the steps of the Capitol?

CHAPTER X.

LIFE IN WASHINGTON.

Peculiar Social Development in Washington.—Causes of this.—Heterogeneous Elements of which Society in the Capital is composed.—Exceptions to Washington Life, in its exterior aspect.—Refined Circles in Washington.—The Rotunda and the Library.—American Statesmen.—John C. Calhoun.

From the district of Columbia, as from an elevated point of sight, there are some respects in which the whole confederation may be advantageously viewed. To the federal capital, whilst Congress is in session, converge as to a focus the diversified peculiarities and conflicting interests of the Union. Elsewhere you come in contact with but its *disjecta membra;* whilst here, although some features may be but faintly traced, the republic is to be seen in its entire outline. Here the east and the west, the north and the south; the free interest and the slave interest; the commerce, the manufactures, and the agriculture of America, meet face to face, discern their relative positions, and measure each other's strength. This is the arena common to all parties; the spot where great material interests clash and are reconciled again; where national policies are built up and overthrown; where faction developes its strategy, and moral forces exhaust themselves in periodic conflict with each other. Here also is to be seen in constant whirl the balance-

wheel, such as it is, of the most complicated political machine on earth; and here may be best appreciated the working and the value of the constitution.

Contemplated from th e capital, however, the republic is better understood in its political than in its social character. It is quite true that the different phases of American society are to be met with in Washington. But to form a correct estimate of social life in America, it must be carefully considered beyond the bounds of the capital. Its development in Washington is peculiar, owing to the heterogeneous elements which are there thrown together, and considered alone would afford but an inadequate idea of the social system of the continent. In the singular moral agglomeration which Washington presents, whatever may be disagreeable in American society comes strongly out. A more extended survey leaves a better impression. But before taking this survey, it may be as well to initiate the reader into some of the peculiarities of Washington life.

The first thing that strikes the stranger is the unsettled aspect which society there presents. Long before he has analysed it, and searched into its peculiarities, he discerns the traces of instability which are deeply imprinted upon it. He scarcely perceives a feature about it that is permanent—a characteristic that is durable. It affords no tokens to him of constant and undeviating progression; but, on the contrary, all the evidences of froward and fitful life. It seems to have had no past, whilst it is difficult to divine what its future will be—to have been formed to-day, and not designed to last beyond to-morrow. It appears, in short, to be a mere temporary arrangement, to give time for the organization of something better.

Nor is all this difficult to account for. It is the natural consequence of the fluctuating materials of which it is composed, and of the frequently irreconcilable qualities of its component parts. It is like a fabric of coarse texture, hastily woven of ill-assorted materials, speedily dissolved only to be woven again anew. No sooner does it assume a shape than its outlines disappear again, to be once more brought into form, which it is destined again to lose. It is this succession of semi-formation and semi-dissolution—this periodicity in its construction and disintegration—that makes the chronic condition of society in Washington present the same phenomena to the stranger, as other social systems have exhibited when in a state of violent transition.

The better to understand this, let me here present the reader with a general idea of the capital. At best, Washington is but a small town, a fourth-rate community as to extent, even in America. When Congress is not sitting, it is dull and insipid to a degree, its periodical excitements disappearing with the bulk of its population. It is, in fact, a town of boarding-houses and hotels; the principal occupation of those left behind, after the rising of Congress, appearing to be, to keep the empty town well aired for the next legislative session and the next influx of population. During the recess, the population consists of the *corps diplomatique*, the chief and subordinate officials of the government and their families, idle shopkeepers, boarding-house keepers, and slaves. Sometimes the diplomatic body and the higher civil functionaries of the republic, withdraw altogether for the sickly months of August and September. A more forlorn and lifeless appearance can scarcely be

conceived than is then worn by the American capital. It is like a body without animation, a social *cadavre*, a moral Dead Sea.

From this state of torpidity it is annually roused about the beginning of December, the first Monday of which is the day fixed by the constitution for the assemblage of Congress. For some weeks previously to this, the note of preparation is sounded; the hotels are re-opened, whole streets of boarding-houses are put in order for the winter, shopkeepers replenish their stocks, and the deserted village once more assumes the aspect of a tolerably bustling town. But it is not till about the beginning of the year that the tide of population may be regarded as at its full. And what a motley heterogeneous assemblage does Washington then contain! Within a narrow compass you have the semi-savage "Far Westerner," the burly backwoodsman, the enterprizing New-Englander, the genuine Sam Slick, the polished Bostonian, the adventurous New Yorker, the staid and prim Philadelphian, the princely merchant from the sea-board, the wealthy manufacturer, the energetic farmer, and the languid but uncertain planter. Were Washington a large town, with a permanent and settled society, this influx of incongruous elements might periodically merge in without sensibly affecting it. But this is not the case, and it is from the different pursuits, the diversified habits, the opposite views, the conflicting sentiments, the unadjusted sympathies and incompatible tastes of this motley concurrence of legislators, placemen, place-hunters, partizans and idlers, that the characteristics of Washington society annually arise. It is impossible for such materials to combine into a structure, either harmonious

or ornamental. Let me not be understood, however, to say that there are no exceptions to this unflattering picture: for amongst the permanent, as well as the occasional residents of Washington, are many who would do honour to any society; but they are not sufficiently numerous to impart a character to Washington life. They have, generally, their own coteries, to which they confine themselves. They withdraw from that which is foreign to their tastes, and thus the better features of Washington life are concealed beneath the surface. They can neither resist the tide, nor guide the current; so they modestly dip their heads, and let it pass over them. It is the rough incongruous crowd that gives society its tone and colouring: and what renders the thing all the more hopeless is, that whilst the general characteristics of the crowd remain, the individuals are constantly changing. Those present to-day are gone to-morrow, their places being occupied by others of the same stamp with themselves. You might as well attempt to construct a city of the ever-shifting sands of the desert, as to organize anything like a permanent social fabric out of the incoherent and evanescent materials which are to be found in Washington.

To reduce the moral chaos, thus annually presented, to something like shape and order, the most powerful influences are required, and some of the best of these are wanting. In no part of the republic is the social sway of woman so limited as it is in the capital. This does not arise from any inferiority in the Washington ladies, but from the absolute paucity of their numbers. The great majority of those who crowd into the city during the session, either leave their families behind them or have none to accompany them. It is

quite true, that most of the members of the Senate, and several of the Lower House, are accompanied by their wives and children; but these, with the flying visitors, male and female, who constantly come and go, are exceptions to the rule. To the great bulk of the merely sessional residents, the stay of a few months in Washington is regarded more in the light of a protracted "spree" than as anything else. They may, to be sure, have their legislative and other duties to attend to, but these merely constitute a part of the round of excitements to which they give themselves up. A walk in the streets, a visit to one of the hotels, the very complexion of the boarding-houses, will suffice to show the dearth in Washington society of the more softening influences. When neither House of Congress is sitting, groups of male idlers are constantly to be seen loitering in the streets, or smoking and chewing in crowds in front of the hotels, where they ogle with little delicacy the few women that pass; or noisily congregated in the bar-room, treating themselves liberally to gin slings, sherry cobblers, and mint juleps. The more quietly disposed of the members of Congress take up their quarters in the boarding-houses more convenient to the capital, where they are accommodated in messes, sometimes twenty of them living together under the same roof, and daily meeting at the same table. These "Congress messes" are imitated elsewhere, and for one boarding-house with mixed company, there are ten in which no female but the landlady is to be met with. It is obvious that such a development of social life can give rise to but little variety of mental occupation. Parties, generally speaking, with no very extensive range of intellectual acquire-

ment, thus kept constantly together, under almost the same circumstances, have but few topics of conversation, but these unfortunately are prolific of wrangling and excitement. Politics and party questions occupy nine-tenths of their time, in discussing which their minds are kept, as it were, in a continual state of fever heat. The habit of disputation which this engenders, and the state of normal antagonism into which it casts their minds, are by no means favourable to the cultivation of the social amenities. Their constant intercourse with each other is as that of partizans or political opponents. The tie of friendship is subservient to considerations of party and self-interest, and it is seldom that they find those ameliorating influences intervening between them, which, in other portions of the world, partly separate only to keep men in kindlier contact with each other. The Sabine women interfered between their kinsmen and their husbands, and made friends of those who had been mortal enemies. It is a thousand pities that the genial presence of similar arbitrators does not interfere to soothe the asperities of political disputation in the American capital.

From all this may be readily conceived how coarse and unattractive a surface Washington society presents to the world. On most persons who come in contact with it is its effect speedily discernible. In the case of some it tarnishes the lustre of pre-contracted refinements; in that of others, as colours are fixed by fire, it aggravates the rougher and more repulsive features of their character. Many sink to the condition of moral bears—demeaning themselves as if they had never known a social restraint, and as if the more graceful conventionalities of civilization were

essentially alien to their nature. In their mutual intercourse, but little courtesy of manner or suavity of disposition is displayed. They are manly without being gentlemanly. When they do approach a lady, their demeanour is more that of elaborate awkwardness than of ease and self-possession. Their politeness partakes largely of the characteristics of their daily life; it is bustling, obtrusive, and sometimes offensive. Time and again have I seen ladies blush at the awkward ambiguity of their compliments. But how can it be otherwise with those, who generally exchange the duties of the day only for the grosser amusements? In the way of the higher amusements, Washington is very ill provided. Were music cultivated, or did the drama flourish in it, or were there other sources of intellectual pastime to which the jaded politician could resort, the aspect of things might be changed. But as it is, the approach of a third-rate vocalist, of a peripatetic juggler, or a strolling equestrian company, creates a sensation in Washington equal to that of an English village under the same lofty excitements. I once witnessed the performance of an equestrian company there, when the whole population seemed to have gathered under the tent, including the diplomatic corps, and the functionaries of government, with the exception of the President. This want of intellectual amusement, combined with the inadequacy of female society, throws many into a course of habitual, but still temperate dissipation. From morning till night the bar-rooms of the hotels are full; the bar, indeed, being the chief source of the hotel-keepers' revenue. Amongst those who frequent them is generally to be found a large sprinkling of members of Congress.

Some of these gentlemen, for want of other occupation, raised a subscription two or three years ago, for the purpose of presenting a testimonial to one of the bar-keepers of the National Hotel, whose fame as a compounder of gin sling and mint julep was almost co-extensive with the bounds of the republic. Amongst the ornaments of the bar was a portrait of this functionary, exhibiting his adroit manipulations in the more critical operations of his calling. The testimonial consisted of two silver cups, similar to those used by him in compounding his mixtures, the inscription on one of them testifying that they were a token of the admiration of the donors, for his "eminent services at the Washington bar." I do not mean to say that this was a national tribute to the worthy in question, but it speaks volumes, that its principal promoters were members of the federal legislature.

Few as are the virtues of social life which sparkle on the surface of Washington society, it was some time ere I was made aware of the extent to which its vices were covertly practised. Walking home one morning, about two o'clock, with a friend, he asked me, whilst passing down Pennsylvania-avenue, to accompany him to a place where he would show me a feature of Washington life to which I was yet a stranger. We thereupon entered an open lobby, and passed up stairs, when, on opening the first door we came to, I beheld, as thick and as busy as bees in a hive, a set of men in crowds around several tables, engaged in the hazards, and plunged in all the excitements of gambling—the game being faro, and the stakes by no means contemptible.

I remained for some time contemplating a scene, singularly diversified, as respects character and the

display of passion. The company was of a very mixed character, comprising artizans, tradesmen, shopkeepers, a few professional men, and many idlers. Noisiest and busiest of all, was one of the members for Alabama; and it was not long ere I heard exclamations, alternating between satisfaction and disappointment, breaking from lips which I had heard discourse most eloquently in the Capitol on the aristocratic vices of England. The night was hot, the atmosphere of the room was stifling, and most of those present were in their shirt-sleeves. In a back room, the door of which stood invitingly open, was a table amply set out with a gratuitous provision of edibles, and every species of alcoholic beverage. On entering we were invited to partake, but declined. The less experienced hands vainly endeavoured to drown their excitements by frequent potations—the more knowing kept aloof from the bottle.

On quitting this scene, we entered three other houses close by, only to witness, in each, a similar exhibition.

"I am surprised," said I to my friend, on our finally emerging into the open air, "to find so small a community as that of Washington so largely impregnated with some of the worst vices of the wealthier and more luxurious capitals of Europe."

"Many of those whom you have just seen," said he, "are driven to the gambling-table merely to while away their time."

"But could they not," inquired I, "accomplish the same object by seeking other occupations?"

"The worst of it is," rejoined he, "that their opportunities in that respect are limited. Such of them as have a taste for society soon exhaust the

round of their acquaintances, and having no other sources of legitimate pastime within reach, must elect between *ennui* and questionable devices to avoid it. Such, on the other hand, as have no taste for social intercourse, resort, perhaps naturally enough, to equivocal practices. Add to this, that some of the members, who receive eight dollars a-day and live perhaps upon three, have spare cash in hand, which they look upon as so much money found, and which they are willing to risk, on the ground that, if they lose it, they will be none the poorer. This calls annually to Washington a number of professional gamblers, who generally manage to fleece a few of the people's representatives, although they sometimes get plucked themselves."

As already intimated, the foregoing description is not universally applicable to Washington society. It is its portraiture, as it strikes the stranger who stands aside an impartial observer of its general development. Such as I have shown it to be, is it in the main,—the ungainly product of unsympathetic elements,—the rough fabric, woven of intractable materials. Its softer and more attractive features have to be sought to be observed: they do not, however, enter into the general picture, being more like ornaments upon the frame. Notwithstanding its general roughness, there are pleasant byways in Washington life. Its turbulent current is flanked by many quiet eddies, where refinement prevails, and whence the social graces are not banished.

The better portion of Washington society is confined to a very narrow circle. It has a fixed and, at the same time, a flitting aspect, a nucleus and a coma. Its permanent centre is composed of the

families of the resident officials; its varying adjuncts consist of such families as are only sessionally resident, and such flying visitors as are eligible to its circle. Amongst the members of the resident families is to be found a degree of refinement and elegance, which would do no discredit to the best society in the most fashionable capitals. Their mutual intercourse is easy and graceful, and pleasantly contrasts with the general boorishness which surrounds them. Nor are they deficient in spirit, humour, vivacity, or intellectual acquirements—the young ladies being well disciplined both in the essentials and the accomplishments of education, and well trained to all the conventional elegancies of life. Amongst the resident families may be comprised the different members of the diplomatic corps, embracing the representatives of all the great powers, with the single exception of Austria. Forming a large proportion of the circle in which they move, their influence upon its general character is permanent as it is obvious. Superadded to these are the families of such members of Congress as choose to come thus accompanied to the capital during the legislative session. These again comprise two classes; such as fuse into the more select society of the town, and such as combine to form a circle of their own. The latter generally consists of New Englanders, who are more staid of habit, more sedate in their social deportment, and more severe in their moral and intellectual discipline, than the more mercurial Southerner, with whom they are placed in temporary juxtaposition. It was my good fortune to know several families from Massachusetts and the neighbouring States, who were thus banded together, having monopolized several contiguous boarding-

houses, and holding but little intercourse with any beyond the pale of their own circle. But the great majority of these temporary residents merge at once into the society of the capital. Composed, as it thus is, of different but not unharmonious materials, the better order of society in Washington exhibits a mixed but very pleasing aspect, presenting a happy combination of European urbanity and American accessibility. It is thus characterised by a politeness which disowns frigidity, and a cordiality which discards affectation.

It is unnecessary here to enter into further particulars concerning it, partaking, as it largely does, of the characteristic features of American society; of which a general view will be taken in the following chapter. It may be as well, however, to make a passing allusion to its accessible quality—not that it throws its doors open to every stranger who knocks for admittance, but that it is readily satisfied with a good recommendation and a gentlemanly deportment. The following may serve as an illustration of the ease which marks its general intercourse, and the perfect confidence which its different members have in each other. The first time I went to the President's house was without any formal invitation. I was visiting one evening a family which honoured me with its friendship and intimacy, when an invitation came from Mrs. Polk, inviting its members to the Executive mansion, which was hard by. The attendance of a professional vocalist had suddenly been procured, and the invitation was to a private concert, in one of the family drawing-rooms. The young ladies declined, on the ground of having visitors; an answer was immediately returned, inviting them to bring their friends. We accordingly went; and thus my first

presentation to the President and his Lady was of a more agreeable character than had it been attended with all the formalities of a state occasion. It is very common for the families of such members as live in the hotels, to give weekly "hops," as they are called, which are neither more nor less than dancing parties, divested of some of the usual ceremonies of such assemblages. To one of these, occurring on the same evening at the National hotel, my friends were invited, as was I, to come under their auspices. The amusements of the evening were thus pleasantly varied between music and the dance; the demeanour of all whom I met at both places being such as bespoke a refinement at once easy and unexceptionable. The true source of this rather attractive feature of American life will be subsequently considered.

The life of such of the residents as move in this circle is one of constant excitement during the session, and of comparative repose during the recess. I once remarked to a lady, that Washington must be very dull when Congress was not sitting. She assured me that it was quiet, but not dull. It was true, she said, that, for the sickly months, it was deserted by all who could afford to leave it; but it appears that, for some time after the rising of congress, the resident society enjoys many a pleasant *réunion*, without the presence of strangers, or of the excitements which mark the period of the year when they are drawn to the town. The *élite* of Washington then meet each other almost as friends who had been separated for some time; when their intercourse is of the most easy, friendly, and informal description.

During the season, the time of the fashionables is pretty well occupied with balls, public and private,

soirées, concerts, and other entertainments. In addition to the part which they take in the "west-end" doings of Washington, the *corps diplomatique* keep up a distinctive circle of their own; forming, as it were, a less world within a very little one. Prominent in that circle is the sexagenarian envoy of Russia, with his young and lovely American wife; between whom and the bachelor plenipotentiary of England a friendly emulation seems to exist, as to who can give the best dinner-party. In the summer time, when the grounds around the White House are clothed in verdure, and the still more beautiful precincts of the capital are shrouded in foliage, and enamelled with flowers, a military band performs for some hours twice a week, in each alternately, when Washington presents a scene as gay as Kensington Gardens sometimes exhibit, under similar circumstances; the population turning out in their best attire, and promenading in groups to the sound of music, over the soft grass, amongst trees, shrubs, and flowers, and amid refreshing fountains, whose marble basins are filled with gold and silver fish.

The Rotunda of the Capitol and the Library of Congress are two favourite places of lounging during the day, at least between twelve and three, whilst both Houses are sitting. The latter particularly seems to have been consecrated to the purposes of flirtation. It is a large and handsome room, occupying the whole breadth of the back wing of the Capitol, well filled with books, which are seldom read, however, during these hours. It is flanked by a spacious colonnade balcony, which commands a noble prospect, comprising the basin of the Potomac, and a considerable portion of the State of Virginia, the principal part of the town, and long successive sweeps

of the fertile plains of Maryland. On this balcony, in the room, and in the different "chapters" or recesses into which it is divided on either side, may daily be encountered during the session a fair representation of the beauty and accomplishment of America. Here are to be found the exquisitely formed and vivacious creole from New Orleans; the languid but interesting daughters of Georgia and the Carolinas; the high-spirited Virginia belle, gushing with life, and light of heart; the elegant and springy forms of he Maryland and Philadelphian maidens, and the clear and high-complexioned beauties of New England. They are surrounded by their male friends, aged and young, the *attachés* of the different embassies enjoying a mustachioed conspicuity in the scene, and pass the hours in frivolous chit-chat, laughing and merry all the while. Now and then a busy politician enters from either House, with bustling gait and pensive brow, refers to some political volume, and disappears, leaving the room once more in the possession of the idler, the flirt, and the coxcomb.

The conversation of one of the groups of idlers chanced one day to take a literary turn, when a discussion arose as to the authorship of the passage, "Music hath charms, &c." Being unable to solve the difficulty, two or three of the ladies bounded towards a sofa, on which reclined the veteran ex-President, John Quincy Adams,* jaded with political warfare and panting with the heat, which was excessive. He had just come from the House of Representatives, where he had been listening to a fierce debate, involving the character of one of the first statesmen of the Union, and one of the greatest ornaments of his country. Without ceremony, they

* Since dead.

presented their difficulty to him, and begged him to solve it; but the "best read man in America," as he was styled, was discomfited, and had to own himself so, after being convinced of his error in hinting that the passage might be found in the "Merchant of Venice." The incident is trifling in itself, but it is nevertheless characteristic.

But one of the most interesting of all the features of Washington life is the society of its leading politicians. The ability and grasp of thought of some of these men are only equalled by their suavity and courtesy. It must be confessed, however, that this description applies to but few in number—the real statesmen of the country—not the crowd of brawling and obstreperous political adventurers who unfortunately play too conspicuous a part in the social drama of the capital. Foremost of those who do honour to their country by the pre-eminence of their talents, the purity of their intentions, and the lustre of their social qualities, is John C. Calhoun, one of the senators for South Carolina. It was my privilege frequently to enjoy the society of this gifted and distinguished personage, who, by the charms of his conversation, as well as by his affable demeanour, excites the admiration of all who approach him, whether old or young, friend or adversary.

The foregoing sketch may suffice as an outline of social life in the American capital. If, in its main features, it is not as attractive as are the conventional phenomena of more polished communities, it will be seen that it is not deficient in traits, which relieve the rudeness of its general character, or in veins of sterling ore beneath, which, to some extent, atone for its superficial asperities.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL VIEW OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.

Different Bases on which Society in the two Hemispheres is erected. —Social and Political Equality in America.—Effects of this upon Society in its external manifestation.—Difference between society in its comprehensive, and society in its narrower, sense, in America.—Influence of Woman within the Family sphere.—Curious Effects of this upon the general Development of Society.—Exclusiveness characteristic of the In-door Life of American society.—Its manifestations in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York.—Essential difference between Northern and Southern society in America.—Causes of Dissimilarity.—Subsidiary Divisions of American society.—Influence of Religion and Politics.—Prominent Position of the Young Ladies.—Consequences of this.—Position of the Young Men.—Standard of Social Requirements.—Power of Women in America.—Duties which devolve upon the more Intellectual Class.—Effect of Marriage upon the Social Position of the Female.—Early Age at which Freedom of Action is accorded to Young Women in America.—Results of this.—Intercourse between the Sexes.—False Notions as to the Prudery of the Sex in America.—Life in Newport, Rhode Island.—Early Marriages, Hotel Life, and their necessary consequences.—Love of Music and Dancing.—Relative Positions of Masters and Servants in America. —Duel in America.—American Beauty.

If there is much in the social development of America that strikes an European as different from that to which he has been accustomed, he should recollect that society, in the two hemispheres, rests upon very different bases. In the old world, where the feudal relations are still permitted so largely to influence the arrangement of the social system, society

presents an agglomeration of distinct parts, each having its determinate relation to the rest, and the members of each having the range of their sympathies confined to their own particular sphere. European society, in its different manifestations, is constituted, as it were, of a series of different layers, which, though in close contact, only partially fuse into each other. The consequence is, that, although a common tie of mutual dependence unites the whole, there is no common feeling pervading it, each class looking chiefly within itself for its sources of enjoyment and intellectual gratification, and recognising the others more as political necessities than as social adjuncts. The sympathies of one order touch, but do not intertwine with, those of another, each living within itself, as if it had no interest in common with the others, and holding little intercourse with them. This distinctiveness of class is also accompanied with an inequality of position, which exaggerates the prevailing exclusiveness, and fetters the general relations of society with a constraint and formalism, which renders one class, by turns, arrogant and awkward, and the other supercilious and condescending. Within each the social graces are more or less cultivated, and the refinements of life more or less displayed; the constraint is visible at their line of contact, as mutual dislike is often found to pervade the borders of two civilized and amicable states. In its general aspect, therefore, the internal intercourse of European society is less marked by kindness than by formality, less regulated by sympathy than by rule.

Very different from this are both the basis and the manifestation of society in America. There social inequality has never been a recognised principle,

moulding the social fabric into arbitrary forms, and tyrannically influencing each person's position in the general scheme. Society in America started from the point to which society in Europe is only yet tending. The equality of man is, to this moment, its corner-stone. As often as it has exhibited any tendency to aberration, has it been brought back again to this intelligible and essential principle. American society, therefore, exhibits itself as an indivisible whole, its general characteristics being such as mark each of the different classes into which European society is divided. That which developes itself with us as the sympathy of class, becomes in America the general sentiment of society. There is no man there whose position every other man does not understand; each has in himself the key to the feelings of his neighbour, and he measures his sympathies by his own. The absence of arbitrary inequalities banishes restraint from their mutual intercourse, whilst their mutual appreciation of each other's sentiments imparts a kindness and cordiality to that intercourse, which in Europe are only to be found, and not always there, within the circle of class.

The ease, and sincerity of manner, which spring from this social manifestation, are so marked, as immediately to strike even the most apathetic observer. There is very little in America of what we understand by acquaintanceship. Intercourse leads to friendship, or it leads to nothing, it being contrary to an American's nature to feel indifferent, and yet look cordial. Having none of the sympathies, he has none of the antipathies of class; his circle is his country; and in that circle, admitting of no superiors,

he sees none but equals. Not but that there are in America many who are superior, in the share which they possess of all the conventional ingredients of a gentleman, to the great bulk of their countrymen, and to whom cultivated society is more grateful than that which is rude and undisciplined. The distinction of polish and refinement is all the difference that is discernible on the surface of American society, there being no exclusiveness of feeling, or isolation of sympathy concealed beneath a polished exterior. The American is first and essentially an American, and then a gentleman: with him refinement is not the enamel which conceals what is beneath, but the polish which brings out the real grain, exhibiting him in a better light, but ever in the same character. I have often been struck with the readiness with which the ease and frankness characteristic of American intercourse, have led parties to an unreserved interchange of views and sentiments, although they might have come from the most remote parts of the country, and had never seen each other before. How can it be otherwise, when the Georgian can put himself at once into the position of the Missourian, and the resident of Louisiana finds in himself the counterpart of the inhabitant of Maine? It is this ease of manner which so frequently offends the stranger, who does not comprehend its origin: that which is the natural result of the universality of feeling and sympathy in America, is regarded as an impudent liberty with us, when a member of one class dares to address one of another, in those terms of familiarity, which nothing but a community of interest and sentiment can render tolerable. An American can be as reserved as anybody else, when he comes

in contact with one whom he does not understand, or who will not understand him—and this is the reason why so many travellers in America, who forget to leave their European notions of exclusiveness at home, and traverse the republic wrapped in the cloak of European formalism, find the Americans so cold in their demeanour, and erroneously regard their particular behaviour to themselves as the result of a general moodiness and reserve.

It is obvious, however, that to retain this ease and accessibility of manner, it is very necessary to guard the equality of condition which is at their very foundation. Americans are all equal, not only in the eye of the law, but in social position, there being no rank to which one man is born and from which another is excluded, any more than there is political status, which, instead of being gained by personal effort, is a mere matter of inheritance. In European society, the superior ranks have every advantage in the cultivation of manner, for when not with equals, they are with inferiors, and thus learn ease and acquire self-possession. So it is with all Americans, who have no superiors to put, by their presence, an awkward, constrained, and artificial cast upon their actions. But let this equality of condition be invaded, and let a distinct class arise in America, with distinct interests and views of its own, and let that class take form and obtain an organized footing in the community, and the natural and unaffected manner, which marks the intercourse of society in that country, will give place to the artificial traits which indicate its European manifestations; and against this danger American society has constantly to struggle. It is difficult, where there are vast accumu-

lations of wealth, to adhere to a horizontal scale in social conditions. In America wealth has great influence, and the circle of its possessors is daily being enlarged, a state of things which would bode no good to the social equilibrium, were it not for the presence of other and counteracting influences. If there is a very wealthy class in America, there is not a very poor class, by whose co-operation the wealthy class might act with effect upon the mass intervening between the two extremes. Indeed, so far as competence involves the absence of poverty, there is in America no class which can strictly be denominated poor; that is to say, there is no class whose condition is incompatible with their independence. It is evident, therefore, that although wealth has undoubtedly its influence, and invests its possessor with a certain share of adventitious consideration; it has, as yet, no power in America to alter the essential characteristic of society — that universal equality which is based on universal independence. In the political equality of the people is also to be found another of the counteracting influences which check the social tendencies of wealth. In the great political lottery which is constantly being drawn in America, no man, however rich, can tell how greatly he may be benefitted by another man, however indifferent may be his circumstances: and, indeed, it is not the rich who have there the greatest political influence; it is the busy bustling politician, who plunges into the thick of the fight, and works his way to the influence which he covets, at the expense of his time, his convenience, and often his better feelings. With so many, and frequently such rough competitors, to deal with in the political race, the

wealthy, to whom life has other attractions, retire from the scramble, leaving the ring in the possession of the energetic, the needy, and the adventurous. Thus it is, that if the rich man has a political object of his own to subserve, he cannot afford to lose the aid of his less wealthy neighbour, but frequently more influential politician. The consequence is, that between the political footing of the one and the wealth of the other, they meet on neutral ground, where they find themselves restored to that equality which, but for the circumstances in which they are placed, might have been permanently disturbed. If, on the other hand, the rich man has no selfish object in view, he knows not how soon his poorer neighbour, in the constant fermentation which is going on around him, may be suddenly thrown into a political position, which gives him in the eye of wealth fully as much consideration as it can draw to itself; and this process is of daily occurrence in America. The political arena is filled with those who plunge into it from the very depths of society, as affording them a shorter road to consideration than that which they would have to pursue in the accumulation of property. Daily accessions being made to the wealthy class itself, whilst there is no definite section of society from which it is known that they will spring; and daily transmutations going on from obscurity to political importance, whilst political aspirations are limited to no class, and political aid may be received from an individual, emanating from the humblest sphere,—render it impossible, without the presence of a poor and absolutely dependent class, for wealth, at least in its present development, to over-ride the social order of things

established in America. Keeping this in view, it need surprise no one to find a free and unreserved intercourse subsisting externally amongst all the members of the community. The man of leisure, the professional man, and the merchant, the mechanic, the artizan, and the tradesman, meet each other on equal terms, the only obstacle that can arise between them being, on the part of any of them, impropriety of behaviour or infamy of character. So long as the ballot-box is in the hands of those with whom the suffrage is universal, so long will the poorer classes have it in their power to check any social aberrations in the more wealthy, should the latter be inclined to substitute for the general easy intercourse which prevails, an exclusive social and political regime.

The reader will scarcely have to be told that all this is applicable only to society in its grander and more comprehensive sense. It has nothing to do with the arrangements of the parlour, or the etiquette of the drawing-room. It is not society in its purely domestic or *in-door* character, to which his attention has been drawn; but to society in its general and *out-door* sense, to the great social life of the people considered as a people. When we leave the national survey for the comparatively insignificant arena of fashionable life, we find much that will appear exceptional to what has been here said; but the exceptions are mere grafts upon the great social trunk which we have been considering, drawing their life and nourishment from it, and partaking of many of its characteristics, instead of being growths emanating from the root, and typical of the very nature of the tree. The picture just considered, if it possesses no very strong

lights, is devoid of deep shadows; but that which I am now about to sketch, in connexion with the social habits of the people, in a more limited sense, is more marked with differences, if not replete with contrasts.

It may as well here be premised that, in America, the ladies exercise an undisputed sway over the domestic hearth. Home is their sphere, and to them all the arrangements of home are exclusively left. In many respects, this is the case in every civilized society; but in Europe the family is, in some points, as much under the control of external influences, as the individual, denying to those who manage the household that perfect freedom of action which they enjoy in America. Let no querulous lady, who thinks that she has not enough of her own way, imagine that this implies, on the part of her more fortunate American sister, an absolute immunity from marital control. Wives in America know their place, and keep it, as generally as they do here, although how far that may be, might be difficult to tell. But, whilst in their social relations they are less fettered by existing institutions than European women, there is a more general abdication in their favour, on the part of husbands, in all that concerns the domestic arrangements and external relations of the family, than is, perhaps, to be found any where else.

The consequence of this is curious enough. The social position of the husband is not carried, in all its extent, into the social relations of his family. His sphere of action is without, where all are on an equal footing; but in the position of his family, and in their intercourse with those of his neighbours, he finds no such principle very generally recognised. Equality without—exclusiveness within—such seem to be the

contrasts of American life. The professional man may be on the very best of terms with the blacksmith, but ten chances to one if the daughters of the professional man know the blacksmith's daughters, or if they would acknowledge it if they did. In-door life in America is fenced round by as many lines as social life in Europe. There is not a community there, any more than here, but has its fashionable quarter and its fashionable circle. This may be all very natural, but it is not in conformity with the general aspect of their national social life, that they carry with them into these coteries all the exclusiveness of feeling which forms so marked a feature in the social fabrics of the old world. In a widely extended country, like the transatlantic republic, and a widely scattered community, like that which peoples it, it is to be expected that these feelings would manifest themselves, in different places, in very different degrees. In some, however, they assume a form quite as inveterate as they do with ourselves; and young ladies will turn up their delicate but saucy noses at the bare idea of an acquaintanceship with those, with whose fathers or brothers their own fathers or brothers may be on terms of the most perfect familiarity. The circle once drawn, it is not very easy for those without to transcend it. The family that introduces a new member, is held responsible for his or her good behaviour and respectability; and it is not always that the countenance of a particular family will suffice to give a party the free range of the favoured circle.

In great communities, where the circle of society is large, and the lines have been long drawn, one need not be surprised at this, the fashionables finding

within their own circle sufficient sources of amusement and gratification. But it is singular to witness the speedy development of the feeling in a new community, where inequality of circumstances is scarcely yet known; where all are, side by side, though in different ways, perhaps, equally engaged in the pursuit of the same end. Indeed, it is in these communities that the feeling is generally carried to its most ludicrous extent; society in the older and larger cities having assumed a fixed form, in which each family has its appropriate place; but in the new towns, the prize of social pre-eminence being yet to be striven for, those who are uppermost for the time being, assume a very supercilious attitude to those below them. It is in these matters that the men in America take very little part. Whilst they are engaged providing the means, the mother and the daughters are using them in working the family into its true position as regards society.

The exclusive feature of American society is no where brought so broadly out as it is in the city of Philadelphia. It is, of course, readily discernible in Boston, New York, and Baltimore; but the line drawn in these places is not so distinctive or so difficult to transcend as it is in Philadelphia. The fashionables there are more particular in their inquiries, than are their neighbours, before they give admittance to the stranger knocking at their gates. As a general rule, an unexceptionable recommendation is all that is necessary in America to secure the stranger a ready acceptance by those to whom he is presented. The presumptions are all in favour of his fitness for the sphere which he aspires to adorn. To this, however, society in Philadelphia forms the most

notable exception; a recommendation there only operating to put the new comer on his probation, and if found wanting, his recommendation goes for no more than it is worth; being estimated more from the proved qualities of the party receiving, than from the standing or authority of the party giving it. Once admitted, however, society in Philadelphia will be found amply to compensate for any delays and uncertainties with which the preliminary ordeal may have been accompanied. It is intellectual without being pedantic, and sprightly without being boisterous. It seems to be a happy blending of the chief characteristics of Boston and New York society. In both society is more accessible than in Philadelphia. In Boston the nucleus on which it turns is the literary circle of the place, which, comprising individuals and families of all grades of wealth, gives to society there a more democratic cast than it possesses either in New York or Philadelphia. It must be confessed, however, that there is a literary affectation about it, which is easier to be accounted for than endured, Bostonians always appearing to best advantage when they are farthest from home. In New York, again, the commercial spirit predominates over every other, and largely infuses itself into the society of the city. There is a permanent class of wealthy residents, who form the centre of it; its great bulk being composed of those who, by themselves or friends, are still actively engaged in the pursuits of commerce. With a few exceptions it is, therefore, in a state of constant fluctuation, in accordance with the fluctuating fortunes of commercial life. Its doors are guarded, but they seem never to be closed, and you have a constant stream flowing in and out. The consequence

is, that there is much more heart than refinement about it. It is gay to a degree, sprightly and cordial, but far less conventional than the corresponding circle in Philadelphia. Society in the latter has all the advantages incident to a large community, in which the commercial spirit does not overbear every thing else, and in which literature is cultivated as an ornament, more than pursued as a business. In their habitual intercourse with each other the Philadelphians have an ease of manner which is perfectly charming. They are familiar without being coarse. It is not until the stranger gets upon the footing of being thus treated by them, that he begins to appreciate the real pleasures of Philadelphia life. It is only after he has surmounted the barrier of formalism which encounters him on his first entrance, that he becomes aware of the genial and kindly spirit that pervades the circle to which he is introduced. In many respects, Philadelphia life is the best counterpart which America affords to the social refinements of Europe, whilst it has at bottom a warmth and cordiality, the manifestation of which is not always compatible with the exigencies of European etiquette.

In a social point of view, there is this difference in America between the north and the south; that in the former, society, in its narrower sense, takes its chief development in towns, whereas, in the latter, it is more generally confined to the rural districts. This difference is chiefly attributable to the different systems which obtain in the distribution of property, and to other causes, social and political, which will be presently adverted to. As a general rule, in the north and west there is no such thing as a country society,

in the ordinary acceptation of the term. The land is divided into small lots, each man, generally speaking, occupying only as much as he can cultivate. The whole country is thus divided into farms; there are few or no estates. The rural population is almost, without exception, a working population, with little leisure, if they had otherwise the means, to cultivate the graces of life. As you travel through the country you see multitudes of comfortable houses and good farming establishments, but no mansions. There is not, in fact, such a class in existence there as is here known as the country gentry. A more unpromising set of materials from which to construct an elegant social fabric, can scarcely be conceived than these northern and western farmers. The following incident will illustrate the whole class. I was acquainted with a farmer in Western New York, who was lucky enough to stumble upon a piece of land with a good "water privilege," which he soon turned to account, and became the "jolly miller" of the surrounding district. By means of his mill, he amassed what, for one in his condition, was a considerable fortune; and, at the instigation of his wife, who was fonder of show than her husband was, turned some of it to account in building a handsome two-story stone house, in contact with the unpretending wooden one, which they had inhabited for years. It was not, however, until the house had been built that they discovered that they had no use for it. When I knew them, and it had then been built five years, but two rooms in the whole house were furnished,—a parlour for great occasions, and a "spare bed-room;" the family continuing to eat, drink, and sleep in the old wooden building, to which they had been

accustomed, and which still remained as a wing to the new house, which was seldom or ever made any use of. And so it is with most of them. Their habits are those of industry and frugality, predisposing them neither for fine houses, fine clothes, nor fine equipages. It is quite true that many of them do move into their "new houses," but they bring all the tastes and habits of the old house with them, and alter their condition but little by the change. Such is the phase which rural life presents in the north and west, with a few slight exceptions, such as are to be found in the upper portion of the Genesee Valley, along that of the Mohawk, and by the shores of the Hudson in New York, where some families have accumulated in their hands large properties, and live in a style which presents a marked contrast to the rural life around them.

In the south, on the other hand, things assume a very different aspect. In the States of Maryland, Virginia, the two Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida, as indeed in all the Southern States, land is possessed, as with us, in larger quantities; the owners, as in England, generally living on their estates. It is thus that, although Baltimore has its social circle, the chief society of Maryland is to be found in the counties; whilst, in the same way, the capital of Virginia affords but a faint type of the society of the State. In the rural life of these two States, and in that of South Carolina, are to be found many of the habits and predilections of colonial times, and a nearer approach to English country life than is discernible in any other portion of the republic. The country is divided into large plantations, containing, in many instances, many thousands of acres; on which reside the dif-

ferent families, in large and commodious mansion-houses, surrounded by multitudes of slaves and by all the appliances of rural luxury. It is thus that, removed as they are from the necessity of labour, and being interrupted in their retirement only by the occasional visits of their friends and neighbours, the opportunity is afforded them of cultivating all those social qualities which enter into our estimate of a country gentry. In the society of the Southern Atlantic States, but particularly in that of the three last mentioned, there is a purity of tone and an elevation of sentiment, together with an ease of manner and a general social applomb, which are only to be found united in a truly leisure class. Any general picture of American society would be very incomplete, into which was not prominently introduced the phase which it exhibits in the rural life of the South.

In some instances, American society is broken into subsidiary divisions through the influence of religion. I do not here allude to the effect which sect has in this respect, and which is in some places so powerful as virtually to establish a system of mutual non-intercourse. The division referred to is more into congregations than sects; the frequenters of particular places of worship having frequently little or no social intercommunication with those of others, even when they belong to the same denomination. The *odium theologicum* has nothing to do with this, nor would, probably, any such social division exist, especially between members of the same denomination, but for the frequency with which their religious duties bring the members of each church together. Between Prayer meetings, and Bible Society meetings, and Dorcas Society meetings, and Sunday School

Teachers' meetings, nearly every night in the week, in addition to Sunday, sees them brought together,—a constancy of association, which soon induces them to regard all beyond their own number with a feeling of indifference. The Dorcas Societies, in particular, are great favourites with the ladies more religiously inclined; seasoning, as they do, a bit of this world's enjoyment with the simultaneous performance of the obligations of charity. The ladies of a congregation, married and expectant, the latter generally predominating, meet in rotation at their respective houses at an early hour in the afternoon; sew away industriously by themselves until evening, when the young gentlemen are introduced with the tea and coffee; whereupon work is suspended, and a snug little party is the hebdomadal consequence, characterised by a good deal of flirtation, and closed by prayer: the young men afterwards escorting the young ladies home, and taking leave of them, to meet them again next week under the same happy circumstances.

Bitter as party feeling frequently is in the United States, it is seldom permitted very materially to influence the relations of society. Not that the ladies eschew politics, but they do not refuse to commingle on that account; nor will they permit the political disputes of their male relations to disturb the arrangements which they have made for themselves. Fathers, brothers, and husbands, may tear each other's eyes out at their political tournaments; but wives, sisters, and daughters meet each other in friendly intercourse as before—gathered under the same roof, singing the same songs, and giggling at the same nonsense. Sensible, this, as compared with

the ridiculous extent to which party hostility has been carried in the neighbouring province of Canada, where those on opposite sides, and all connected with them, have not only refused to associate but actually even to deal with each other.

There is no feature common to all the departments of American society, which will so soon impress itself upon the stranger as the prominent position occupied in it by the young ladies. In Europe, if they are not kept there, they at least remain somewhat in the background. In America, on the other hand, they are in the foremost rank, and in fact constitute the all in all. Cards of invitation are frequently issued in their names—it being often "The Misses So-and-so" who invite, instead of "Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so." The mother is invariably eclipsed by her daughters. Indeed, I have known instances in which parties were given, at which she never made her appearance; the whole being done with her concurrence and assistance, but she keeping back from a participation in the prevailing gaiety—just because she has no inclination to join in it, prudently judging —wise woman!—that her time for such frivolities is past. The young ladies take the whole burden of the matter upon themselves—receive the guests, and do all the honours of the house. The absent mamma has her health frequently inquired for, but nobody ever thinks of wondering that she is not present. She is perhaps all the time in an adjoining room, superintending the arrangement of the comestibles. She regards the whole as the young ladies' doing, and leaves them to work their way out of it the best way they can. And very well they generally manage to do so—the opportunity which it affords them of cul-

tivating the virtue of self-reliance being by no means thrown away. The young gentlemen, in making visits too, *may* ask at the door for the lady of the house, but such considerateness is a piece of pure supererogation, the young ladies being the parties generally called on, and frequently the only parties seen, if not the only parties asked for. Nor is a long acquaintanceship necessary to establish this footing of pleasant familiarity. You are introduced at a party to a young lady, dance with her, talk a little, and, if she is at all pleased with you, the chances are all in favour of your being invited to call upon her—but by the somewhat guarded phraseology that "we" and not "she" will be very happy to see you. It is your own fault if, from that moment, you are not on intimate and friendly terms with her.

Agreeable as all this may be in some respects, it has very serious disadvantages in others. It imparts to society a general air of frivolity with which it could favourably dispense. When pert young misses of sixteen take it all into their own hands, what else could be expected? Not that all young ladies in America remain at sixteen, either in conduct or in years; but the younger portion of them just admitted into society make themselves more or less the pivot on which it turns. A young girl lives a life of great seclusion until she does come out, but, having an occasional peep at the conduct of her elder sisters or friends, her mind is made up as to the part she is to act before she is formally ushered into the arena. With the exception of some of the more refined and intellectual circles of the large towns, it is sometimes painful to witness the frivolous character of an American social assembly. There is no repose, nothing of

a subdued tone about it. The few whose refinements and tastes would favourably influence it, if permitted to do so, are overborne by the numbers as well as by the forwardness of those who impress it with their own immaturities. Society in America is thus like a young hoyden that wants taming—like an inexperienced romp, as yet impatient of the fetters of conventional propriety. The difficulty is, that the remedy for this does not seem very near at hand, for the young blood which influences society to-day will be superseded by that of to-morrow. American society is thus deprived of the best of all teachers—experience; for, by the time that a lady learns how to act an easy and more subdued part, there is no prominent place for her in the social circle.

The consequence of this is, that both men and women of intellectual tastes and quiet habits withdraw more or less from society altogether. It is seldom, therefore, that conversation in a social assembly takes a sober, rational turn. Dreary commonplaces, jokes and vapid compliments, form the staple of conversation, all which is attended by a never-ceasing accompaniment of laughter, which is frequently too boisterous for all tastes. Such being its prominent characteristics on the female side, the picture does not improve when we examine the part borne in it by the men. It is seldom that one ever sees the generality of men rise above the level of their female acquaintances, either in intellectual culture or social refinement. In all civilized communities, women have, in this respect, much in their power. It is for them to select their own associates; and such as aspire to their intimacy will be careful to possess themselves of all those qualifications which are made indispens-

able to its enjoyment. In American society, the really intellectual man holds a position of comparative isolation. To take his part with the rest, or to be tolerable in their sight, he must be-little himself to the social standard adhered to by those around him. The great proportion of the young men who frequent the social circle, if any thing fall within than exceed this standard. Indeed, it could scarcely be otherwise, when we consider how alien are their common pursuits to the acquisition of those higher qualities which shine so prominently in the social arena elsewhere, and how little is really required of them to come up to the mark in the estimation of those with whom they associate. A good command of common-places, with a large stock of the "small change" of conversation, will do far more for a man in American society, generally considered, than the possession of higher qualifications will accomplish for him. The Americans certainly worship talent, and hold in high esteem the man of great intellectual acquirement; but they generally prefer reverencing him at a distance to coming in close contact with him; at all events, if he takes any share in their *réunions*, he is more acceptable when he leaves his distinctive qualities behind him. I have seen grave senators, who understood this well, cut the most ludicrous figures, in attempting to render themselves agreeable to giggling young misses, who made very little ceremony with them. Some of them succeed well in the process of intellectual descent, particularly those who have no very great distance to descend. But others find their attempts mere caricatures on frivolity, and, after a few awkward endeavours to accord with circumstances, very frequently withdraw altogether from

circles, to the requirements of which they cannot conform themselves.

There is no other country within the pale of civilization, where women might effect so much by elevating the social standard. As a general rule, the men in America fall far short of the women in intellectual culture and moral refinement. Most of them enter upon the walks of business at an early age, before the character is formed or the tastes are well disciplined. The unremitting attention which they pay to business ever afterwards precludes them from, if it does not indispose them to, making any effort at improvement; and society, exacting no very high standard of excellence from them, wears a rough garb, and what is worse, exhibits an unprogressive aspect. If the better educated and the more intellectual class of women in America would play a more prominent part than they do in the social circles of their country, the happiest results would accrue. But they shrink from the task, deeming it hopeless on a comparison of the means with the end, and content themselves with vainly regretting the unintellectual mould in which society around them is cast. I have heard many women of superior acquirement deplore this state of things, when they contrasted the dreary monotony of society in their own country with the happy combination of features which distinguishes many of the social circles of Europe. In confining themselves to these vain regrets, they under-estimate their own power. They could do much to improve the aspect of things around them, by united and persevering effort. But before anything can be effected in this desirable direction, they must put some check upon the absolute social sway of young ladies in their

teens. They must cripple the now unbounded influence of youth, inexperience, and thoughtlessness; and make discipline, settled character, and knowledge of the world, the pivots on which society should turn. The matron must, at least, divide the sway with the giddy-headed girl, or it will be vain to expect that society in America will be speedily rescued from the tyranny of frivolity to which it is at present subjected.

Another feature in American society, which soon excites the surprise of the stranger, but which is, in fact, a mere illustration of the foregoing, is the little attention which is paid in the social circle to married women. She may be young, beautiful, and accomplished to a degree, and may, indeed, but yesterday, have been the reigning belle, but, despite of all this, from the moment that she submits to the matrimonial tie, the American woman is, socially speaking, as the common phrase is, "laid on the shelf." From habit and old associations she may for a while make her appearance in company, but at longer and longer intervals, until, after a very short time, in the great majority of cases, she disappears altogether, only again to cross the threshold of society when her taste for its enjoyments is blunted, when her cheek is faded and her youth gone, and when she has daughters of her own to introduce. Whilst the young ladies engross all attention to themselves, the married ones sit neglected in the corners, despite the superiority which they may sometimes possess, both in personal charms and mental accomplishment.

Many of the peculiarities of American society can be directly traced to the education of young women in the United States—by which I do not mean the

system of teaching adopted in schools, so much as the moral and social discipline which they undergo. A freedom of manner, and a liberty of action, are extended to them, very different from the strict and vigilant guard which is kept over young women in the older hemisphere; and which seems to be but a necessary corollary from the political order of things in America. In a country where there are so few conventional restraints, and where the very institutions of society give rise to great latitude of action and freedom of intercourse, more depends upon individual character, than in communities where the conduct of parties is more regulated by the rules and the machinery of class. A young girl in America is in every way a freer agent than her European sister: the whole course of her education is one habitual lesson of self-reliance—the world is not kept a sealed book to her until she is tolerably advanced in years, then to be suddenly thrown open to her in all its diversity of aspects. From the earliest age she begins to understand her position, and to test her own strength—she soon knows how to appreciate the world, both as to its proprieties and its dangers—she knows how far she can go in any direction with safety, and how far she can let others proceed—she soon acquires a strength of character, to which the young woman of Europe is a stranger, and acts for herself whilst the latter is yet in leading-strings. All this would tend, were her entrance into society a little longer delayed, or were the sway which she acquires over it somewhat postponed, to impart a much more sedate and serious character to American social intercourse than it possesses. It is this very freedom of action that precipitates her into an

influential social position, at a time when she is neither fitted for it nor able fully to appreciate its responsibilities. Her course of education tells unfavourably upon society, before it has fully succeeded in telling favourably upon the individual—by which time, as already intimated, in nine cases out of ten, her influence over the social regime is gone. The order of things around her exposes her to more dangers than the young girl in Europe has to encounter, but she acquires strength of character to meet them. The whole tendency of her education, whilst it is attended with some risks, is to unveil these dangers to her, and to arm her against their approaches. How far this may strengthen the character at the expense of the affections—how far it may fortify the judgment, but weaken the heart—it is not necessary here to inquire.

The latitude of action here referred to, necessarily involves a free and habitual intercourse between the sexes. This is permitted from the very earliest ages, and never ceases until the young girl has left her father's house for that of her husband. The freedom thus extended is one which is seldom abused in America, and is more an essential feature than an accidental circumstance in a young woman's education. The young man invites her to walk or ride with him, and her compliance with the invitation is a matter solely dependent upon her own humour; he escorts her to the concert, or home from the party, the rest of the family finding their way thither or returning home as they may: indeed, I have known the young ladies of the same family escorted by their male acquaintances in different vehicles to the same party, where they would make their appearance, perhaps, at differ-

ent times. Nor is this confined to cases in which the young men are recognised admirers of the young ladies, a friendly intimacy being all that is required to justify invitation on the one side, and compliance on the other. A young woman here would regard such conduct as a disregard of the proprieties of her sex; if it were looked upon as such in America, it would not be followed. The difference arises from the different views taken in the two hemispheres, by young women, of their actual position. In America it neither impairs the virtue, nor compromises the dignity of the sex. It may be somewhat inimical to that warmth of imagination, and delicacy of character, which, in Europe, is so much admired in the young woman, but it is productive of impurity neither in thought nor conduct.

That such is the case, no stronger proof can be given than the almost Quixotic devotion which the Americans pay to the sex. The attention which they receive at home and abroad, in the drawing-room, in the railway-carriage, or on board the steamer, instead of resulting from familiarity, is dictated by the highest respect; for whilst the young woman in America is learning the realities of her own position, she acquires a knowledge of that of her companions, and knows how to keep them in it.

This will not seem to accord with the impression, which is so general here, of the overdone prudery of the American women. They are as ready as any of their sex to resent a real indignity; but nothing could be more erroneous than to suppose that they carry their regard for delicacy so far as to bespeak a real impurity of imagination. That in some parts of the country an over sensitiveness in this repect exists,

is not to be denied; but it is confined to certain localities, where it is directly attributable to circumstances, which have had no existence in others. It may yet be traced, to a certain extent, amongst the descendants of the Puritans; but even amongst them, not in that degree in which some writers have improperly left it to be inferred that it is a general characteristic. If there is any difference between American and European women in this respect, the latter, as a general rule, are the more liable to the charge; the former often conversing upon subjects on which the latter would be backward in touching, with an unreserve which bespeaks the absence of all improper thought or motive.

For several years past, the town of Newport in Rhode Island has been the most fashionable sea-bathing place in the country. I once spent a fortnight there during the season. The very first day I was there, whilst strolling with a friend on the beach, we met a party of ladies and gentlemen with whom he was acquainted, and to whom he immediately introduced me. After conversing for a short time, I was surprised at a proposition made to us by one of the young ladies to go and bathe with them. I afterwards found that this was no uncommon occurrence at Newport—the ladies and gentlemen having different accommodations, in which they provided themselves with suitable bathing dresses, habited in which, they dash out, hand in hand, sometimes forty of them together, into the surf upon the beach. I confess I thought this more in accordance with the social habits of Paris and Vienna than with those of the United States. There was in it a latitude which was no more typical of the general habits of the people than is the

prudery which is, in some instances, carried to an excess. Indeed these may be regarded as the two extremes, between which are to be found the real sentiments and true habits of the people. The error lies in that summary process of generalization, which extends, without inquiry, to all, the peculiarities which are observable in a few.

The precocious age at which marriages frequently take place in America, has also occasionally its visible effect upon society. It appears ridiculous to those accustomed to the order of things on this side of the Atlantic, to see the boy and the girl, as yet apparently unfitted for final emancipation from the boarding-school, assume with the utmost nonchalance the conjugal responsibilities. In a new country, where every one has plenty of room, and where energy and industry are sure at once to command a competence, early marriages are not only allowable, but in some cases desirable. The relationship, which, in a crowded community like this, may weigh like a millstone about a young man's neck, is found in America to be frequently the spur to enterprise, when enterprise is all that is necessary to ensure success. But this does not justify marriages at ages at which even the precocity of America does not ensure maturity of judgment or character. Were the infant couples, which one everywhere meets with, to settle down into domestic habits, beyond occasionally finding out that they had made a mutual mistake, the mischief might not extend. But in a great many such cases, marriage does not result in immediate domesticity. The connexion is formed before either party can become at once reconciled to the cares and troubles of housekeeping. Hence it often happens

that these never enter into the calculations of a young couple contemplating matrimony. It is to the hotel they look, not to the domestic hearth, as their immediate home, after the ceremony is performed. The American towns, the larger ones particularly, are studded with hotels, half the support of which is derived from permanent boarders, who generally consist of newly-married parties, who are anxious as long as possible to postpone the disagreeable duty of keeping a house for themselves. There is something exciting about this hotel life, which is pleasant to the young woman, inasmuch as it leaves her much of the freedom which she possessed before she came under the nuptial obligations. It gives her no trouble, and causes her no anxiety; there being an abundance of servants always about her to do her bidding, and the table to which she daily sits down being both elegant and sumptuous. All this is very different from the comparatively tranquil and secluded life which an American wife leads in her husband's home—a life, the contemplation of which is disagreeable to her who has become the wife ere she was yet fairly the young woman. She breakfasts with her husband in the "ladies' ordinary," at which a large and mixed company assemble; after which, she is left alone till dinner time, when her husband, who has been at his business, returns and dines with her in the same company as before. He then leaves her again, and does not return till evening, and sometimes not till a late hour. During his absence she is left to her own resources, and inexperienced as she often is, must be thus exposed to many risks. A stranger or traveller, in passing to or from his own room, along the lobbies of his hotel, if he chances to look in at any of the open

doors which he passes, may see a neat little parlour, with a young woman alone in it, perhaps, for want of other occupation, listlessly thrumming the piano. Returning again, he may observe the same party, varying her occupation by leisurely strolling along the lobby, either alone or in company with some others similarly circumstanced, on whom she has called, perhaps, at some of the adjoining rooms. This mode of life, in addition to its many exposures, has other evils attendant upon it; a couple cannot always thus live, and it is but a poor preparation for the domestic life, to which they must sooner or later betake themselves. It frequently begets a carelessness and want of forethought, that are discernible in their effects long after it is abandoned. Nor are the evils of the system confined to those who submit themselves to it. Its influence extends, more or less, to their friends and acquaintances whom they visit, and who are in the habit of calling upon them. This mode of life is not confined to hotels, but it is in connexion with hotels that its evils are most apparent. To be sure, it is but a small proportion of the American people who resort to it; but the domestic life of America would, on the whole, be improved, if parties did not marry until they could reconcile themselves to the quiet and the duties of home.

The taste for music is universal with the American ladies, in which a very large proportion of them become great proficients. Many of them are also excessively fond of dancing; although there are others by whom this harmless amusement is looked upon as a heinous sin. By none is it more denounced than by the Presbyterians of the north, the terrors of

Church censure hanging over those who might be inclined to offend. I have seen all the Presbyterians at a party withdraw as soon as dancing commenced. So long as there was nothing but gossiping and promenading, arm in arm, about the rooms and lobbies, there was no harm done; but the moment that it was proposed to continue the chit-chat in a *vis-à-vis*, and to move the feet to the sound of music, instead of doing so at random, in the sight of these well-meaning people, some recondite line of the moral law was about to be transcended, to which they would not be parties themselves, nor would they stop to witness the sin of others.

There is another point, in reference to which the impression prevalent in this country is somewhat erroneous, — that involved in the relation between master and servant in America. It is quite true that the gulf which separates these two classes of society in England is greater and more impassable than it is in America; the master in the former occupying higher, and the servant lower ground, than in the latter. But it is equally true, that in America there is a broad and distinct line drawn between the two conditions of master and servant. If the servant is not as obedient as he is in Europe, or the master as exacting, it is not because the servant puts himself on a footing of equality with the master whilst the relation subsists between them, but because both parties look to the time when that relation will be dissolved, by the servant becoming himself a master. There is in America, with the exception of the Slave States, no permanent class of servants as in other countries; but to suppose that, so long as any individual acts in the relation of a servant, he puts himself, in all respects,

on an equality with his master, is to be in error; and much more so to think that, should such equality be asserted, it would be conceded by the master. In America, as elsewhere, the servant, so long as he remains a servant, is in subordination to the master, although the tie is more easily and more frequently broken, because the servant is not in the same position of absolute dependence as elsewhere. He may become unmanageable from the readiness with which he can find employment; but the moment he trenches upon the master's prerogatives he is dismissed, instead of being permitted to share them. It is quite true, that in many of the rural districts, particularly in the newer settlements, masters and servants live upon the same footing. But this occurs in a state of society in which the drawing a line of distinction would be as impossible as it would be ridiculous. The farmer who works side by side with his servant, tilling the same field with him, and coping with him constantly at the same work, could scarcely sit in one end of the house at his meals whilst the servant sat at his in the other. The farmer, his sons and servants, work together and eat together, living as nearly in a state of equality with each other as can be. This, however, is the case in the rural districts of Canada as well as in those of the United States. But to think that the same practice in its totality, or even in a modified form, enters into all grades of society, is erroneous. In American society, in the ordinary sense of the term, the servant is the servant, as in Europe. In America they may be more impertinent, and less easily kept in their places; but this results not from the master's giving way to any unreasonable claims, but from the fact that servants there can more easily find other places than with us.

Amongst a people so widely scattered, and living under such different circumstances, one may naturally expect to meet with every variety of character, and every stage of social development. It is almost impossible for one at a distance, in contemplating a moral picture so diversified as is that presented in America,—from the life of the backwoods-man on the Miami or the Wabash, to that exhibited by the polished commercial community on the coast, and from the indolence and impetuosity of the Southerner, to the plodding enterprise and the equanimity of the New Englander,—to distinguish at all times between a local peculiarity and a general characteristic. Hence it is, that amongst the mistakes fallen into, the whole American people are too readily blamed by the European, for the savage character which duelling assumes in some parts of the country. It would be equally just to comprehend the abolitionists in the blame of slavery; or to say, that because steamers are constantly being blown up on the Mississippi, they are necessarily being so upon the Hudson also. Nowhere is the duelling spirit prevalent in the South so severely reprehended as in the Northern States. It is seldom that a duel occurs in the latter, but far more seldom that it is attended by any of the savage accompaniments which so often characterise the duels of the South. Even in the South itself there are differences in this respect, there being some districts in which the propensity to duelling assumes the type of an ineradicable chronic distemper. In places thus afflicted, society displays a degree of over-sensitiveness, which is quite unnecessary for the conservation of honour. In no place, perhaps, is this over-sensitiveness so much exhibited as in the capital of Virginia. But a high degree of

physical sensibility, whilst it may result from a fine nervous organization, may also be the consequence of an inflammatory disorder: and so with this over-sensitiveness of feeling; it by no means proves a healthy moral state, or a clear perception of the real nature of honour. It is curious to witness the extent to which, in such places as those alluded to, all parties are equally infected. When a quarrel arises and a duel is the consequence, the whole community take sides, ladies and all, and the merits of the quarrel are discussed with the utmost coolness; one set coming to the conclusion that the challenger under the circumstances could not but challenge, and the other that the challenged could not but fight. But I allude to this merely to remove the impression that the duel is a practice which universally obtains in America, or that it is countenanced by the tastes, the habits, and the views of society at large. So far is this from being the case, that some, even of the Western States, have lately adopted the most stringent provisions for its suppression.

It is scarcely necessary, in here concluding this survey, again to remind the reader, that society, in the larger communities already named, has reached a point of development, which renders much of the foregoing nearly as inapplicable to it, in connexion with these communities, as it would be to the social condition of London or Paris.

I cannot do better than close this chapter with a brief reference to the style and characteristics of American beauty. There are two points in which it is seldom equalled, never excelled—the classic chasteness and delicacy of the features, and the smallness and exquisite symmetry of the extremities. In the

latter respect, particularly, the American ladies are singularly fortunate. I have seldom seen one, delicately brought up, who had not a fine hand. The feet are also generally very small and exquisitely moulded, particularly those of a Maryland girl; who, well aware of their attractiveness, has a thousand little coquettish ways of her own of temptingly exhibiting them. That in which the American women are most deficient is roundness of figure. But it is a mistake to suppose that well-rounded forms are not to be found in America. Whilst this is the characteristic of English beauty, it is not so prominent a feature in America. In New England, in the mountainous districts of Pennsylvania and Maryland, and in the central valley of Virginia, the female form is, generally speaking, as well rounded and developed as it is here; whilst a New England complexion is, in nine cases out of ten, a match for an English one. This, however, cannot be said of the American ladies as a class. They are, in the majority of cases, over delicate and languid; a defect chiefly superinduced by their want of exercise. An English girl will go through as much exercise in a forenoon, without dreaming of fatigue, as an American will in a day, and be overcome by the exertion. It is also true, that American is more evanescent than English beauty, particularly in the south, where it seems to fade ere it has well bloomed. But it is much more lasting in the north and north-east: a remark which will apply to the whole region north of the Potomac, and east of the Lakes; and I have known instances of Philadelphia beauty as lovely and enduring as any that our own hardy climate can produce.

CHAPTER XII.

POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Complexity of the American System.—Its Double Aspect, central and local.—The Constitutional System in its Federal capacity.—The Executive Power—Its Authority, Responsibility, and Means of Government.—The Legislative Power—Its Constitution, Functions, and Modes of Action.—Single and Double Chambers.—The Veto Power.—Mode and Terms of Election to the Two Houses of Congress.—Basis of the Representation.—The Ballot.—Peculiar Position of the Senate.—Its Executive Functions.—The Doctrine of Instructions, as applied to it.—The Presidential Election.—Mode of conducting it.—Manner of Election, when no Choice by the People.—Single and Double Terms.—Views entertained by many, of the President's Position and Power.—Anomalous Position of the Vice-President.—Territorial Government.—The American System, in its relation to the different States.—Their Sovereignty, Independence, and Separate action.—Conflict of Jurisdictions.—Prospects of the Union—Its Weakness—Its Strength.—Combination of the National and Federal Principles.—Nullification.—Cost of Government in England and America.—Contrast between the Political Systems of the two Countries.—Note.

By those who have not closely examined into its constitution and working, it is very generally, but very erroneously, believed that the political scheme of America is one of the most simple arrangements, and that the machinery of its government is free from the complications observable in the institutions of other countries. The only thing in which the American system is simple is the principle upon which it is based—the political equality of man; the governmental superstructure which is raised on this foun-

dation presenting to the eye of the careful observer one of the most elaborate political devices on earth. The complicity which characterizes the American system is not, however, that which arises from confusion, being solely attributable to the number of its parts, and the necessary intricacy of their collocation. Whatever may be thought of its absolute excellence, or of its adaptation to its purposes, every one who comprehends it must admit that the American constitution is one of the most ingenious pieces of political mechanism that ever resulted from the deliberations of man. Let not the reader shrink from the brief sketch of it which follows, under the idea that it is to assume the character of a minute analysis, or a learned and technical commentary; my object being to present such a picture of it to him as may not only inform the mind, but also leave an impression upon the imagination.

The federal character of the republic was the chief difficulty in the way of the organization of the general government. When there are but one people and one set of interests to provide for, it may be a comparatively easy matter, if the people are understood and their interests appreciated, to devise a constitutional framework for their political life. But in America the case was widely different. In framing a constitution for the whole body, the social and political peculiarities and conflicting interests of thirteen different and independent communities had to be studied; and the task of framing such a system as would reconcile all, whilst it offended none, was one, the magnitude of which is only understood when it is considered that, previously to the Revolution, they had but little in common with each other, either as to

tastes, sympathies, or habits; that great event uniting them, for the first time, in the pursuit of a common object, and for the avoidance of a common danger. And not only had the necessities of the times to be consulted, in devising the constitution; the exigencies of the future had also to be provided for. The fabric to be reared must be such as to afford accommodation for future as well as for present applicants; sufficiently compact to meet the wants of existing communities, and sufficiently elastic to embrace future sovereignties, without distorting its outline or impairing its strength. How far its framers succeeded in their object may be inferred from the fact, that the constitution devised for the thirteen original States, has, without any essential change in its character, expanded its dimensions, until at present no less than thirty different and mutually independent communities are embraced within its pale. The American confederation now exhibits no less than thirty-one different political systems in contemporaneous operation; the federal government which, for certain purposes, extends over the whole Union, and the thirty different constitutional schemes, which the thirty different States have adopted for themselves, for the management of such matters as do not fall within the purview of the powers of the general government. One of the grand difficulties originally in the way was to draw the line between general and local jurisdiction. In most instances it is broadly traced, but in some points so lightly defined as to give rise to frequent struggles between the Federal and State authorities.

The republic then presents two aspects, one in its confederate, the other in its separate capacity. And first, for a brief glance at its confederate side.

In taking this glance, it may be as well at once to refer to the broad and simple basis on which rests the whole structure of the American government. At the foundation of all, and permeating the entire system, is the principle of the absolute sovereignty of the people. The presence of this fundamental idea is discernible in the whole constitutional arrangement, as its influence is perceptible in its every modification. It is the grand rule to which power, in all its delegated forms, is the exception. There is no authority possessed either by the general government, or by the State governments, which has not emanated from a voluntary abdication *pro tanto*, on the part of the people. Government is not in America a self-subsistent power, coercing the people into subjection; but the instrument of their authority and the exponent of their will. The assertion of this popular sovereignty necessarily implies the subjection to the strictest accountability of all the departments of the government. With but few exceptions, the elective principle is applied to every office in the State, whilst the tenure of office is of but brief duration. Authority proceeds from the people only to merge again in the fountain whence it flowed. It thus never becomes independent of its source, periodically lapsing into it, as the vapours which exhale from the earth fall again upon its surface in showers. By the time that power can acquire any independent interests of its own, it sinks again into the body of the constituency, the ruler being retransformed into the citizen ere he forgets the rights and privileges of the citizen. It is obvious that this constant creation and surrender of authority is necessary to the maintenance of that rigid responsibility, which is a corollary to the

principle on which the government is founded. In considering the structure of the federal and state governments, it will be seen that throughout, the people appear as the great depositories and dispensers of power, that those clothed with authority are made as directly as they are frequently responsible to them, and that revolution is averted from the system itself, by the constant changes which are taking place in the *personnel* of its administration.

The original articles of confederation having been found inadequate to their purpose, the present Constitution was adopted a few years after the close of the revolutionary struggle. One of the greatest alterations then effected in the federal system, was the establishment of a single Executive. By the Constitution, the whole executive power of the government, with some checks, to be hereafter noticed, is vested in the President of the United States. To arm this department of the government with sufficient authority to give it that efficiency which would secure the due administration of the laws, and command respect both at home and abroad, and at the same time so to regulate the exercise of its authority as to prevent it from trenching upon the other elements of the system, was the great problem, to which were directed the most anxious deliberations of the convention which formed the Constitution. And in no other part, perhaps, has the Constitution proved so faulty as it has in this, when we consider, in illustration of it, the manner in which Mr. Polk contrived with impunity to override it, in taking those steps in the conduct of his government, which were the proximate cause of the Mexican war. Although the power of declaring war and of making peace is

expressly vested in Congress, the Executive managed, without nominally usurping the prerogatives of Congress, to get the two republics into a "state of war," which necessarily devolved upon Congress the necessity of providing the means for carrying on hostilities, a course by which the legislative body virtually took upon itself the responsibility of the contest. It was in vain that many voices were raised against the gross invasion of the Constitution of which the Executive had been guilty, and that many warnings were given of the danger of appearing even to sanction it. The passions of the democracy were roused for the time being; they were seized with a lust for war, and cared not what came of the Constitution so long as the predominant appetite of the moment was gratified. But the whole transaction is pregnant with serious lessons to the American people, affording, as it does, a proof of the ease with which an unscrupulous government may violate their charter; and the ready indemnity which it may receive for so doing, at the hands of a misdirected populace. This should be a serious reflection to a people who regard the Constitution as the basis of their whole political system. In view of recent events, can they any longer repose in the full confidence that it is a foundation of rock for the Union?

To the President is entrusted the management of the foreign relations, together with the administration of the internal affairs of the Union. As regards the former, however, he is not, as is the case with the executive department in constitutional monarchies, invested with unfettered discretion, subject only to a general responsibility to public opinion; the Senate so far participating in executive authority as to have

a direct and immediate control over the foreign relations of the republic. For instance, no treaty can be concluded with any power without the assent of two-thirds of the Senate; nor can an ambassador or a secretary of legation be appointed to a foreign government without the confirmation of his appointment by a majority of that body. To a certain extent, the President is still left the power of independent action; it being his duty to initiate, that of the Senate to ratify or disapprove. Both Houses of Congress may urge him by resolution to adopt a particular course, with regard to a foreign power, but he is not compellable to listen to them. Sometimes, again, in matters in regard to which an absolutely independent action is left him, he prefers taking the advice of the legislative bodies; which they may tender by joint or separate resolution, or which they may refuse, leaving the executive to act upon its own responsibility. Such was the conduct pursued by Mr. Polk on the Oregon question. It was quite competent for him to have given notice to the British government of the expiration of the then existing treaty, at the end of a year from the time of giving the notice. But he shrank from the responsibility of the tremendous issues apparently contingent upon such a step, and wisely sought, in taking it, to shelter himself under the previous sanction of Congress. This participation by one branch of the legislature in the treaty-making power, as well as in some other executive functions, whilst it is a peculiar feature in the American political system, affords an instance of the vigilant and jealous spirit in which the executive department was conceived.

The President governs through the medium of a

Cabinet of his own choosing, to whose shoulders, however, is not transferred, as with us, the whole responsibility of the acts of the government. The Americans do not recognise the principle that the President can do no wrong. On the contrary, they acted, in determining his position and duties, upon the supposition that it was in his power, if it was not his inclination, to do every mischief, and therefore fettered his actions. The ability to do wrong involves responsibility for doing it; and although the policy of the government may frequently be the result of evil counsels, no one ever thinks of screening the President behind his Cabinet. The constitution of the Cabinet is itself a pretty good indication of the range of Presidential authority. It is composed of the heads of the five principal departments of State—those of the Treasury—of State—of War—of the Navy, and of the Post Office. The Attorney-general of the United States is also frequently a member of it. In this list the reader will miss the Home department—that of State having no concern with any matters but such as appertain to the foreign policy of the country. The Home business is attended to by each State for itself. The internal administration of the federal government is exceedingly limited, being principally confined to the management of the Post Office—the raising of the revenue—enforcing the observance of treaties—the control of the Indian tribes—and the municipal government of the district of Columbia, and of the territory comprised within the limits of such forts and dockyards as are in the possession of the United States. The President is also Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy—the executive government

having the exclusive control of the movements of the existing land and naval forces of the confederation. He is also Commander-in-Chief of the militia, when actually in the service of the United States, until which time they remain under the exclusive direction of the authorities of their respective States. So far reference has been had to him in his executive capacity. His legislative functions will be considered in treating of the legislature.

No one connected with the executive government is permitted to occupy a seat in either House of Congress. This is very different from the rule which obtains with us, of requiring the presence of the heads of departments at least in one or the other House of Parliament, and is considered by many in America a disadvantageous feature in their political scheme. The result of it is, that with the exception of such messages as are from time to time transmitted to Congress by the President, all direct communication is cut off between the legislative bodies and the executive government. The former are consequently very frequently in painful uncertainty as to the views and policy of the latter, which, in such cases, can only be removed by such revelations as the private friends of the executive may make, authorizedly or otherwise, either in or out of Congress. The inconvenience of this was frequently felt both in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, during the progress of the Oregon discussions; the whole country being tossed about between alternations of hope and fear, as the President's friends affected to give utterance to his sentiments in either House of Congress. I well remember the depressing influence produced, particularly on the commercial

States, by the oft-repeated insinuations, by Mr. Allen of Ohio, in the Senate, of his knowledge of the sentiments of the President—whom he represented as not having swerved a hair's breadth from his expressed determination to adhere to the line of 54° 40′. Nor do I forget the consternation which seized the ranks of the war party, when Mr. Haywood, of North Carolina, who was known to be a personal favourite at the White House, laboured for two whole days to show that there was nothing in the Presidential message which necessarily precluded the executive government from accepting the 49th parallel of latitude as the boundary on the Pacific, should Great Britain choose to make the offer. I do not say that if any members of the Cabinet had been present on these occasions, it would have been advisable for them to have disclosed to the whole world the views of the executive government; but their presence would have at least prevented others from speaking in their behalf, and from occasioning the unseemly spectacle of having a grave body like the Senate alternately elevated and depressed by the volunteer declarations of some of its members, who either knew, or only affected to know, what they pretended to reveal. Besides, the government is often placed at this disadvantage by being wholly unrepresented in Congress—that it is frequently undefended, when its policy is impugned; for, whilst it is easy to attack it, they only may be competent to defend it who are in possession of all the motives of its conduct.

The legislative power of the United States is vested in the federal congress, consisting of a Senate and House of Representatives. The American

people were well trained in the school of popular institutions, long before they were called upon to institute an independent popular government. The consequence was, that when they set about the task of framing a constitution, they proceeded to their work, not like dreamers or theorists, but like practical men, who well understand the business in which they are engaged. When the question before them related to the distribution of the legislative power, there were certainly not wanting those who counselled the propriety of having only a single Chamber. But this was a peril which America was by the prudence of her statesmen enabled to avoid. There are many who cannot dissociate the idea of a double Chamber from monarchy, with which it is most frequently found in juxtaposition. They thus contract an aversion to the principle from one of its manifestations. They fancy that they cannot have the benefits without the drawbacks of a double Chamber; whereas a very little reflection might teach them that all that is valuable in the principle might be secured, whilst all that was objectionable was avoided. It by no means follows that, because in most instances in which a double Chamber exists or has existed, one only has, even theoretically, represented the people, whilst the other has, confessedly and notoriously, represented but a class or section of the people, or been entirely constituted of that class, two Chambers could not exist, each of which represented the whole people, though in different modes and degrees.

In countries where there are distinctions of class, the double Chamber has a double object to fulfil; for not only are two legislative bodies, co-ordinate and

independent of each other, deemed necessary as a check upon mischievous and precipitate legislation, but one of the two is designed to keep up the power and privileges of a certain class. But where no such distinction exists there can be no such object as the latter to fulfil; when, if the purpose first named be deemed a desirable one, the sole object of a double Chamber would be to secure it. How far a double Chamber is capable of securing it has been abundantly proved by the legislative experiences both of this country and America. But when the Americans adopted the double Chamber, they had only the experience of England to guide them. They adopted it simply to check reckless legislation; and having once established a dual legislature, they invested one branch of it, with a view to other objects, with peculiar powers. But both Chambers, as will be immediately seen, were made elective, so that both might represent the whole nation. They differ only as to the mode in which, and the terms for which, they are elected. Thus all the benefits of the double Chamber have been secured to them, without their having any cause to be jealous of either of them; at the same time, as will be afterwards shown in treating more particularly of the federal legislature, both Chambers can act a co-ordinate part, really as well as nominally, from being both based upon the suffrages of the people. America has been saved from many a precipice by her double Chamber.

As the legislative body is itself a creation of the Constitution, so its powers are strictly defined by that document. It is a common saying with us, that the powers of Parliament are transcendent and omnipotent; but it is otherwise with the American Congress.

It is only within certain limits that it can constitutionally act; beyond these limits it is as impotent as a child. It is not a body concentrating in itself all legislative powers except such as may be expressly denied it, but a body possessing no legislative power whatever, except such as is expressly conferred upon it. If it transcends the circle of its authority, the Supreme Court of the United States stands by to annul its acts, a relation between the judiciary and the legislature, which will be hereafter more fully explained. Its powers, which are specifically enumerated in eighteen consecutive clauses of the Constitution, have all, more or less, reference to the common interests and general welfare of the Union. Indeed, it can only legislate in matters exclusively federal. Its chief powers are to levy and collect taxes for the purposes of revenue, to regulate foreign and domestic commerce, to coin money, to declare war, and to provide for the common defence by raising and equipping armies, and by maintaining a navy; and, when necessary, by organizing and equipping the militia.

With the exception of money bills, which must originate in the House of Representatives, any legislative measure within the power of Congress to enact, may be initiated in either House. In respect to the introduction of bills, a practice prevails which might be very usefully imitated in this country. At the commencement of each session, both Houses appoint standing committees upon different subjects, within the province of one or other of which such legislative acts as they may be called upon to consider must necessarily fall. Each House, for instance, has its standing committee on Foreign Relations, on Ways

and Means, on Military Affairs, on the Judiciary, &c. When it is found necessary to legislate on any of these subjects, the matter is generally referred to the appropriate committee, which is instructed to report a bill in reference to it, should it see fit so to do. Should it refuse to do so, the power of the House over the subject is not gone, inasmuch as a bill may be introduced independently of such adverse report; and every bill which is introduced, not emanating directly from a committee, may be referred to the appropriate committee, according to the nature of its subject-matter. The consequence is, that bills are in general much more carefully prepared than they are with us; so that the statute-book is prevented from being overloaded, as ours is, with acts to amend acts, and to amend again the amending acts themselves. A bill having passed one House, is sent into the other, where, if it is rejected, it is dropped, as with us, for the session. When both Houses concur, it is transmitted to the President for his approval, and, on receiving his signature, becomes law. If he retains it for ten days after it is sent up to him, without signifying his approval thereof, or dissent therefrom, it then also becomes law. If, however, he dissent within the ten days, the bill is vetoed, when, in order to enable it to become law, it must afterwards receive the assent of two-thirds of the members of each House. If it do so, it becomes law without any further reference to the President.

It is this veto power which, although the first clause of the Constitution declares that all legislative power shall be vested in Congress, defining Congress to consist of a Senate and House of Representatives, makes the executive virtually a co-ordinate

branch of the legislature. It is extremely rare to find parties so unequally matched in the United States as to render it likely that a bill vetoed by the President will be afterwards assented to by so large a majority as two-thirds of either House. The consequence is, that the veto of the President is tantamount to the rejection of the bill by either of the two Houses themselves; and scarcely a session passes in which the power thus vested in him is not frequently exercised. Thus, although, as compared with the constitutional sovereign of this country, he may be fettered and restricted in his executive capacity, his legislative power, although theoretically not greater, is, practically speaking, much more so, being by far more frequently and more boldly exercised, in opposition to the two other branches of the legislature, than it has been in this country for nearly two centuries past.

Such being the constitution of the different departments of the federal government, and such the scope respectively of their authority, it may not now be amiss to inquire how, and how often parties are elected to fill them. With the exception of the judicial office, and the different departments of the executive government, immediately within the control of the President, as well as the more subordinate amongst offices purely ministerial, every post in America must be filled by election. Indeed, in some of the States the elective principle has been carried so far as to include the judiciary itself within its range.

Both Houses of Congress, as already observed, are elective bodies, although in different modes and degrees—the Lower House springing directly, the

Upper only mediately from the people. No one can be returned to this or to the other House of Congress, unless, if he seeks to be a senator, he resides within the State which he wishes to represent; or, if he confine his views to the House of Representatives, he be a resident of the county or electoral district within the State for which he is desirous of becoming member. It is not difficult to discover some propriety in this rule as regards the Senate; but in its extension to the other House, the services of many eminent men are lost to the nation; for, if they are repudiated by the successful machinations of faction in their own localities, they can represent no other constituency in the country. This, however, is all the mischief which the rule works in America. A similar rule adopted in this country would operate in a similar manner, at the same time that it would be liable to the additional objection, that it would enable the government, from the power which the still rotten state of the representation gives it of controlling many constituencies, to get rid of a troublesome member of the House, by simply taking care to have him defeated in his own locality. But now the defeated candidate may be returned by another constituency, over which the government may not have the same power. For some time the rule was with us as it now is in America, but it was soon changed. The House of Representatives is entirely renewed every second year, from the whole body of the people. It consists at present of about 230 members—to prevent it from greatly exceeding which number, the basis of representation is enlarged every ten years, after each successive census. At present there is a representative in Congress for every 70,000 people;

at the adoption of the constitution there was one for every 30,000.

Whilst population is thus made the sole basis of representation, the suffrage is, for all purposes,—municipal, state, or federal,—universal. In a country like America, the whole of whose political fabric rests upon the recognised equality of man, it is difficult to see how any other basis for the representation could have been assumed. In America too, where the people are all, more or less, industrious, population and property are pretty equally distributed throughout the country. Thus, whilst the only basis is assumed which conforms to the spirit of the whole system, the representation, in effect, rests upon the double basis of population and property. The Americans thus aimed at a single intelligible basis, and secured a double one. How different is it with us! It defies the ingenuity of man to state the basis on which representation in Great Britain rests. Indeed it has none, at least none that is intelligible.

It is scarcely necessary here to add, that, with one or two exceptions, the vote in America is universally taken by ballot. One of the objections offered to the adoption of the ballot in England is, that in America, where it prevails, there is no concealment in voting. Generally speaking, this is perfectly true; but they are driven to desperate shifts for argument, who make use of this as one against the power of secret voting. Even if the objection to open voting were simply that it is open, the want of concealment in America would be no argument against the ballot, seeing that, although secret voting is within the reach of every elector, it is not compulsory there. The objection to open voting in a country like this rests

upon the power which it gives to parties, exercising an undue influence, to control the elections. The vote by ballot, without concealment, would be no cure for this evil; but it does not follow that the vote by ballot must necessarily be without concealment. Let it be made compulsorily secret as regards all, and what becomes of the argument founded on the want of concealment? In this country, were it adopted, it would be necessary that, for some time at least, it should be made compulsorily secret; else he who voted secretly would be marked by those who sought to influence him, as much as he who voted openly against them. If, in America, the vote by ballot is given in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred without concealment, it is because the constituencies are so numerous as to be independent—the electors are at liberty to consult their own wishes, and there is nobody to call them to account for the mode in which they have voted. Still, any elector has it in his power, if he so chooses, to vote secretly, and some invariably do so. No argument, therefore, in regard to the adoption of the ballot here, can be drawn from the practice of a country, whose electoral system presents so many points at variance with our own. Here we have numerous small constituencies amenable to local influences. There, all the constituencies are large, the terms for which parties are elected are short, fortunes are not sufficiently great to permit of money being squandered at elections, and the emoluments of office are too small to tempt any one to throw away much money in the hope of attaining place.

It is obvious, that the more populous States will have a larger share in the representative body than

their less populous neighbours. The basis of representation will soon extend to 100,000 persons for each member, when a small State like Delaware, with a population below that number, would be precluded from all share in the representation, but for a provision in the constitution, to the effect, that each State must have at least one member in the House of Representatives. The population of Delaware is, at present, above the mark; but it will not long continue so, when it will owe its possession of a voice in the Lower House to the constitutional provision referred to. Whilst that State has but one member, New York has about thirty-four—the disparities between the rest of the States ranging between these two extremes. This, it is evident, would, in a time of great excitement, result in the virtual political extinction of the smaller States, but for the conservative character of the Senate.

This branch of the federal legislature does not, like the other, spring directly from popular election. Its members are appointed by the legislatures of the different States, each State having two representatives in the Senate. In this body, therefore, the smaller States are on an equal footing with the larger, Delaware and Rhode Island having each as potent a voice in it as New York or Pennsylvania. Thus it will be perceived that whilst it is the people, in their aggregate character, that are represented in the House of Representatives, it is by States that they are represented in the Senate; an arrangement which was adopted to meet the views of all parties. The people of the weaker States justly feared that, if the basis of the representation were alike in the case of the two Houses, their influence in the confederacy would

be contingent on sufferance; whilst those of the larger and more powerful States naturally objected to the principle of equality of representation being extended to both Houses, which would totally deprive them of that share in the general administration of affairs, to which their superior wealth and population fairly entitled them. The arrangement, therefore, is such, that the three millions of people who inhabit the State of New York, have that legitimate influence in the government, which, from their numbers, and the important interests which they have at stake, they can justly claim over the eighty thousand who inhabit Delaware; whilst these eighty thousand, again, are protected in the Senate from being utterly overwhelmed by the three millions. The result of this difference is that, in the Senate, there is no change in the strength or the relative position towards each other, of the different States; whereas, in the House of Representatives, every census introduces a material alteration into the relative positions in the Lower House of the different members of the confederation. By nothing have the successive changes, in this respect, which have already taken place, been so strongly marked, as by the indication which they have afforded of the growing power of the West. In no part of the country is population increasing with such unexampled rapidity as it is in the Valley of the Mississippi; and as every 70,000 added to its numbers during the current decade will entitle it to an additional member in the Lower House, the increased influence which it will thus acquire from the new apportionment of the representation which will be consequent upon the census of 1850, may be readily conceived. The time is within the recollection of

the present generation when the voice of the West in Congress was utterly insignificant; but even already it almost divides the representation with the Atlantic States, and, in 1850, will in all probability outnumber them in the House of Representatives. In less than twenty years it will have the decided preponderance; for whilst population increases in the West, it diminishes in some of the sea-board States. By the last apportionment, not only was the representation of Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio greatly increased, but that of Virginia and other States was actually diminished; the western States thus doubly gaining ground by their own progression and the recession of some of their neighbours. This growing influence of the West is regarded with uneasiness and jealousy by the sea-board communities; and nothing but the peculiar constitution of the Senate will by-and-by interpose as a breakwater between them and its overwhelming force. The arrangement, therefore, originally entered into as a protection of the smaller against the larger States, will soon be found of the last importance in shielding one great section of the confederacy against any abuse of the growing power of another, in preserving an equipoise between the commercial interests of the sea-board, and the great agricultural interest of the interior. So rapid is the progress of this political transformation, that, but for an arrangement adopted with other objects, a monopoly of the whole power of the Republic would soon be achieved by an interest, which, when the Constitution was framed, had scarcely an existence; and the whole influence of the country be centred in a section of it, which was, at that time, an almost unbroken wilderness.

The only change incident to the Senate, is the

increase of its members consequent upon the introduction of new States into the Union. Comprising originally only twenty-six members, it now numbers sixty, each new State adding two members to the body of the Senate.

One of the chief sources of the conservative tendencies of the Senate is to be found in this, that its members, holding as they do their seats for six years, are not so immediately amenable to popular caprice as are those of the other House of Congress, which returns every second year to the people. But lest so long a lease of power should place the Senate for several years together in antagonism with public opinion, the framers of the Constitution were careful to subject it to a wholesome popular influence without rendering it subservient to popular caprice. They consequently determined that, as the House of Representatives was to be renewed throughout every two years, the Senate should also, to the extent of one-third of its whole number, be renewed every second year. Thus, whilst it is entirely changed every six years, it is never wholly changed at once; an arrangement which renders it a more faithful reflex than it would otherwise be of public opinion, in a country where public opinion undergoes such frequent and violent mutations; and, at the same time, enables it to bring to its deliberations a large share of legislative experience, which generally gives to them quite a different cast from that of the discussions which are carried on in the other wing of the Capitol.

If, in its executive capacity, the Senate differs from the corresponding branch of the legislature in this country; it also further differs from it in this,

that, with the exception of the trial of impeachments, the Lower House having the sole power to impeach, it has no judicial functions, no appeal lying to it from any of the ordinary tribunals of the country, local or federal. In this respect its powers also vary from those of many of the State Senates, which present themselves in the triple character of legislative, executive, and judicial bodies, an appeal in most cases lying to them in the last resort from the local tribunals. When in executive session, the proceedings of the Senate are conducted with closed doors. None but a citizen of the United States, of the age of thirty years, can be a member of the Senate, twenty-five being majority, so far as eligibility to the House of Representatives is concerned.

It is in connexion with the Senate as a legislative body, that the doctrine of instructions has been more particularly contended for in America. Representing, as they do, the different States in their collective capacity, many parties hold that the vote of each member, irrespectively of his private opinions, should accord with the political views prevailing, for the time being, in the State which he represents. For instance, one of the senators for New York may be appointed during the ascendancy of the Whig party in the legislature of that State. Should the Democrats turn the tables on their opponents before his term expires, the consequence is, that a democratic Legislature and a democratic State are, it is contended, misrepresented in the Senate, if the senator in question regulates his vote by his own private views. It sometimes happens, that a democratic State and Legislature are represented by two Whig senators, and *vice versa*. To obviate this inconvenience and

injustice, as it is considered in some quarters, the principle of instructions has been resorted to; which, if generally carried out, would draw a line of separation between the action and the judgment of each member of the Senate, and convert him into a mere machine for recording the ever-changing opinions of others at a distance. The general recognition of such a principle would destroy the conservative character of the Senate, by rendering it as subject to all the caprices of the popular will, as is the House of Representatives. It is a principle, however, but partially acted upon, being as fiercely contested as it is contended for. Instances have come within my own personal observation of senators speaking on one side of a question, and, in obedience to instructions, voting on the other.

The legislative body, as thus constituted, is compelled by law to assemble once in each year, the first Monday of December being the day appointed for its meeting. The President may, however, convoke an extraordinary session, whenever the exigencies of the public service may appear to him to require it. Once assembled, the power of adjournment or prorogation is in the hands of the two Houses exclusively; with this exception, that every second year, the Congress, which lasts for two years, being measured by the duration of the House of Representatives, expires by law on the 4th day of March. But it is now time to consider the mode in which parties are elected to the chief executive offices in the republic.

None but a native-born citizen of the United States is eligible to the office of President. When elected he retains his post for four years, at the end of which period he may be re-elected for another

term of equal duration. There is nothing in the Constitution to prevent an eligible candidate from being elected a dozen different times to the Presidency, although custom has limited the longest presidential career to two terms, or eight years.

The Presidential election, like most elections in America, occurs in the month of November, but only once every four years. The nomination of candidates takes place, generally speaking, during the previous May or June. The mode of nomination is this. Each of the great parties appoints delegates to meet at a given place, on a given day, in a national party convention, for the purpose of selecting, from the party ranks, the most available candidate for the coming contest. Party discipline is sufficiently strong to guarantee for the person nominated on either side, the general support of the respective parties. Each party has its own central national committee, which manages everything up to the nomination; after which the issue is generally left to the local efforts, throughout the country, of the political friends of the candidate.

Although elected by the people, in contradistinction to an election by States, the President is not immediately elected by the popular vote at the ballot-box. It is not directly for either of the candidates nominated that the adherents of either party vote, but for the electoral colleges, by whose votes the issue is afterwards to be decided. Each State has its own electoral college, consisting of as many members as the State has representatives in both Houses of Congress. Thus, if New York has thirty-four members in the Lower House and two in the Upper, her electoral college will consist of thirty-six; whereas

that of Delaware will consist but of three, that State having but one member in the House of Representatives, and two in the Senate. The two parties in each State have each their own electoral "ticket;" and according as the Whig or Democratic ticket carries the day, will be the vote of the State for the presidential candidate. The electoral ticket being a general one in each State, the triumphant party carries with it the whole electoral vote of the State. Thus New York, in the case supposed, would give, in the event of the Whigs succeeding, the whole of her thirty-six votes for the Whig candidate. The successful candidate is he who has got a clear majority, not of all the electoral colleges, but of the aggregate number of members composing all the electoral colleges. If it were otherwise, the decision would be by States, not by the people at large. Taking the House of Representatives to consist of 230 members, we have, with the sixty composing the Senate, an aggregate of 290, which would be the aggregate number of all the electors in all the electoral colleges throughout the Union. It would in that case require the vote of 146 at least for a choice. This mode, by giving New York, say thirty-six voices, and Delaware three, gives certainly to the different States very different degrees of influence over the presidential contest; but as the President is to spring from, and to represent the whole people, no other arrangement would be compatible with his so doing; for it is clear that a candidate might have a majority of the States, but not a majority of the people.

But when no clear majority of the aggregate number of all the electoral colleges appears, from there being more than two candidates in the field, or from

any other cause, in favour of any one candidate, and when there is consequently no election by the people, instead of a new election being resorted to, the Constitution has provided for the choice then devolving upon a different quarter. The electoral colleges having failed to do that for which alone they were elected, are, *ipso facto*, dissolved, and the choice of President falls upon the House of Representatives for the time being. But the vote is not then *per capite*, but by States, in which case the one member for Delaware in that House has as great a voice in the matter as the whole thirty-four from New York. The contest is then decided by the majority of States, it being, now that there are thirty States, necessary that sixteen of them should in such case vote for one or other of the candidates. The House is limited in its choice to the candidates, not exceeding three who received the greatest number of votes from the people. Should there be no choice at first by the House, successive ballotings are resorted to, until an election takes place. On two separate occasions already has the election thus devolved upon the House of Representatives, and it was not, on the first of these, until upwards of thirty ballots had been taken, that Mr. Jefferson was elected by a bare majority. Formerly, he who had the next greatest number of votes for the presidency became Vice-President. So long as this remained the rule, it is very obvious that the President and Vice-President must generally, when elected, have belonged to different parties; for who so likely to have the next highest number of votes to that given for the successful candidate, as his opponent? The inconvenience of such an arrangement was felt by all parties, inasmuch as

its tendency was to put in jeopardy all party triumphs; for if any casualty happened to the President, the nominee of the defeated party became President in his stead. To remedy this the alteration was made in the Constitution by which the party successful for the time being fill both offices with their own nominees; it being now the rule for each party to nominate a candidate for the vice-presidency, when one is nominated for the presidency, and to vote for the one as vice-president, as the other is voted for as president. They are thus nominated together, voted for together, and elected together. Both the President and Vice-President may be inhabitants of the same State; but the people of each State, in voting for the candidates, must vote for one at least who is not an inhabitant of their own State. Thus the Whig or Democratic nominees for the two offices may both be from the State of Virginia. In that case, the people of all the other States may vote for them, but the people of Virginia in voting would be required to substitute an inhabitant of some other State for one of them. But the candidates are generally inhabitants of different States. As the Vice-President may be called upon to act as President, he too must be a native-born citizen of the United States.

Such is the mode in which a great people proceed in the choice of their own first magistrate. It argues much in favour of the permanency of the political institutions of America, that nearly sixty years have gone by without their having been shaken to their foundations by the successive and periodic contests for such a prize. To keep the office one of purely popular origin, and at the same time to counteract the excitement naturally attendant upon an

election to fill it, was the great object of the authors of the Constitution; and it was with this view that they interposed the electoral bodies between parties and their candidates, and devolved the whole matter upon the House of Representatives, in the event of there being no popular choice. Many in America regard the presidential election as the great test of the soundness of the Constitution; and some great authorities, such as Chancellor Kent,* are ready to pin their faith to its permanency, provided it withstand the shocks of a few more contests of the kind. Much, however, in the way of the maintenance of tranquillity on those occasions, is attributable to the short term for which the President is elected. Were he, when once chosen, to hold office for life, or for a much longer period than he now does, without re-election, the stake would be all the more important, and the struggle all the more desperate. There are many objections to a double presidential term, the chief of which is, that the first term is generally treated as mere electioneering ground for securing the second. To make the term extend to eight years would be hazardous; and to confine the President to a single term of four years, would be to restrict the office by limits unnecessarily contracted. To get rid of the evils of double terms, and at the same time to avoid the dangers of too greatly extending a single term, some propose that the President should, in future, be eligible for only one term, extending over six years. How far this would avoid difficulty, on the one hand, and prevent abuse on the other, it is not necessary here to inquire. The difficulty might be overcome by the adoption of the rule forming part of the new

* This eminent jurist has died since the above was written.

French constitution, which requires that a term should intervene before any one holding the office of President can be re-elected for a second term. This, it is supposed, will effectually prevent the first term from being made use of to influence the elections for the second. By the adoption of a similar rule the Americans would remove the evil of which they now complain, without lengthening the duration of the presidential term, a step which would be attended with no little peril.

The power and position of the President do not constitute those features in the federal system, which give to all parties the greatest satisfaction. His position is, in many respects, more analogous to that of the prime minister, than to that of the sovereign of this country. In this, however, it differs materially from the position of the head of the Cabinet here, that for a given time the President's tenure of power is certain, without reference to the state of public opinion. So long as the executive and legislative departments are in accord, this is of little consequence—but the evil is felt in all its magnitude when the executive is at war with public opinion, and with Congress as its representative. With us such a state of things would lead to a speedy dissolution of the Cabinet; but not so in America, where the head of the Cabinet has a fixed tenure of office. A President may be for three-fourths of his administration at loggerheads with all parties around him, public opinion being impotent to displace him, until it can next constitutionally apply itself to the ballot-box. This, considering the legislative influence which the President wields through the veto power, occasionally impedes for a time the course of legislation, the President having it in his

power to foil all the efforts of Congress, except in the very rare case of a majority of two-thirds being opposed to him in either House. This temporary independence on the part of the executive, of public opinion, which may sometimes occur, is not only a blunder in the theory of the Constitution, but it is also one, the practical evils of which have been gravely felt, on more occasions than one; and it is the actual occurrence of these evils, more than their theoretical possibility, which has led many to regard this as the weak point of the system. Few, however, who do so, are ready even to hazard a conjecture as to the mode of applying a remedy, the object being to bring the executive office into more thorough subordination to public opinion, but the mode of securing it being extremely difficult to devise. The patronage of the President is great, and sometimes very unscrupulously exercised.

In contemplating the general polity of the American Union, one cannot fail being struck with the anomalous position occupied in the constitutional system by the Vice-President. This functionary, although the death, disability, or absence of the President, may devolve upon him at any moment the chief responsibilities of the executive government, has no seat in the Cabinet, being as much a stranger to its deliberations and its policy as the humblest of his constituents. As both the President and Vice-President invariably belong to the same political party, one would think that it would be insisted upon as subservient to party interests, that the man who may be on any day called upon to administer the government, should be fully cognizant of the policy pursued by the President and his Cabinet. But the views of the govern-

ment, and the motives which influence them, are as a sealed book to him, except so far as he may guess at, as others may do, or surreptitiously acquire a knowledge of, them. Politically speaking, he is a complete nonentity, his only duty being to preside *ex officio* over the deliberations of the Senate. And yet this is the man whom the accident of a moment may place at the head of affairs, and to whom his party look for carrying out its policy, should the President be by any cause removed. He is sometimes treated with the most singular indifference by the President, and by the various heads of departments; a species of treatment but ill calculated to secure a cordial cooperation between him and the President's Cabinet, should he be called upon to take the President's place. This cordiality was far from existing in the only instance in which the presidential office has as yet devolved upon a Vice-President. The Cabinet of General Harrison treated Mr. Tyler with the utmost contempt, and felt rather uncomfortable when, by the death of the President, about a month after the installation of the Whig regime at Washington, the man to whom they had unreservedly given the cold shoulder, suddenly appeared amongst them as their head and master. The result was but natural. One by one, Mr. Tyler got rid of the members of the Cabinet which his predecessor had formed, and afterwards wrecked his own reputation and ruined his party, by attempting to play a slippery game between the two great parties in the country. Had Mr. Tyler been a member of the Cabinet before he was called to the head of affairs, he might have fallen in with the views and objects of his party, instead of being alienated from them, as he was by the super-

cilious conduct of its chiefs. The very party that elected him lost its golden opportunity by the accession of Mr. Tyler to the Presidency; but whether the Union lost or gained by his administration, is quite another question. The darling Whig policy of the day was the re-establishment of the National Bank. A bill which passed both Houses of Congress for that purpose, was vetoed by, to use a seeming paradox, the accidental President of a Whig choice.

The territorial government of the United States is partly vested in the federal executive, and partly in the people of the different territories themselves. The territories are such portions of the public domain as are being rapidly settled, and have had limits assigned to them, with a view to their eventually becoming members of the Confederacy as States. This they become on their attaining a population of 80,000 souls. Until they are admitted as States, their affairs are respectively administered by a Governor appointed by the President, who co-operates with a legislature chosen by the people of the territory. They send representatives to Congress, who can speak, but have no vote. All the States, with the exception of Vermont, which have been admitted since the original thirteen established their independence, were territories before becoming States.

So far the political system of America has been glanced at only in its connexion with the Confederation in its collective capacity. The federal constitution is but a component part of the entire system—the most prominent to us, because it is through its means that the Republic is brought into connexion with the exterior world. But it is far from being the great feature, or the most imposing ingredient

in the constitution of the whole body politic. The portion of their constitutional scheme most worthy of study, and most replete with hope or apprehension for mankind, is that by which their internal affairs are regulated; by which the relations between man and man, amongst them, are defined and enforced; by which their industry is stimulated, their enterprise fostered, and life, property, and reputation are protected. If we would understand the working of the principle of self-government, which lies at the foundation of all their institutions, we must look beyond the machinery chiefly contrived for the maintenance of their external relations, and view the system to which this is a mere incident, in its broader, deeper, and more important character, as affecting the great, scheming, enterprising, speculating, and industrious hive at home.

It will be gathered from what has already been said, that the federal government and legislature have but little concern with the internal affairs of the country. Such powers as are not expressly conferred upon the general government by the Constitution, are, by implication, reserved to the different States. No control over matters of a purely local character having been conceded to it, it follows that such matters remain under the exclusive management of the States themselves. On all questions of a nature purely domestic, and affecting its own interests, each State is entitled to act a sovereign and independent part for itself. Thus, over all matters connected with the material improvement of the State, such as the construction of roads, railways, and canals—with the regulation of its financial system—with its criminal and its penal legislation—with its judicial and minis-

terial arrangements, or with taxation, whether for State or local purposes, the people of each State have reserved to themselves exclusive jurisdiction. They have, of course, as States, no power over taxes or imposts, which, being designed solely for the support of the general government, can only be imposed by it. Each, for the common benefit of all, has parted with some of its inherent powers, and vested them in the federal government; but, beyond these exceptions, its jurisdiction within its own limits is as supreme as if no confederation existed. Thus no State can, by itself, enter into any treaty whatever with a foreign power. It can contract no alliance with a foreign government, or with any other State or States. It can neither declare war nor make peace by itself; nor can it coin money, support an army or navy, or pass any particular laws of naturalization for itself. But it possesses every power which a State can wield, beyond these and some others conceded to the general government. Thus, although it cannot coin money, it can borrow it; and, as it seems, even when it cannot always repay it. And in borrowing money, it has no power to pledge any other credit but its own; a fact which should be borne in mind by such capitalists as are apt to delude themselves with the idea that they can look, in case of default, for payment, to the sister States, or to the general government.

It will be seen, then, that the Union consists of thirty different communities, having no political concern or connexion with each other, beyond that which exists on the common ground on which they all meet at Washington. Thus New York has no connexion whatever with Pennsylvania, except that

which is traced through the medium of the federal Constitution. This remark does not apply to the powerful tie of material interests which unites them all, or at least sections of them, together in bonds, stronger than any which mere political systems could create. But in mutually prosecuting their material interests, their legislation is separate and independent, although a common interest frequently dictates a common policy.

Not only are the different States independent communities in fact, but they exhibit all the outward forms and manifestations of such. Each embodies its separate political existence in a separate institutional system; the basis of which is, in all cases, a State Constitution, which generally opens with an assertion of the sovereignty of the people of the State. They have their own governors, their own legislatures, their own judicial and municipal systems, their own militia for self-defence, their own political organization for every exigency, in short, which does not come within the supervision and control of the United States. This will suffice to give the reader a general idea, which is all that can be here attempted, of the mutual relations between the States and the federal government, and their respective positions in the general system of the Union.

It is this division and distribution of authority that give to the political machine so complicated a character in America. It is true that there is but one line drawn, that which separates general from local jurisdiction; but it is not always easy to determine on which side of the line certain questions should fall. A struggle is thus, more or less, constantly waged between the federal and local autho-

rities, the States being extremely jealous of anything that savours of encroachment by the general government on their rights. The great object is to confine the action of the general government within the smallest compass compatible with the due discharge of its functions. Whilst certain powers are conferred upon it by the Constitution, that document also concedes to it in general terms the right of adopting all such measures as are necessary for carrying its specified powers into effect; and it is in acting on this general power, more than in anything else, perhaps, that the local and federal authorities are brought most frequently into conflict. One party, for instance, denies the constitutional power of Congress to create a National Bank; the other party contends for it, under the general clause alluded to, as being the best means of enabling the government properly to manage the fiscal affairs of the Union. Some, again, contend for the power of Congress to construct roads throughout the Union without the consent of the States through which they might pass, as being one of the means best calculated to carry out the power specifically conferred upon them of providing for the common defence. Others dissent, on the ground, that if such a principle were admitted, the general government might, upon the same plea, construct railways and canals through any State or number of States. The consequence is, that a great national road, intended to unite, with a view to military amongst other purposes, the city of Baltimore, on the Chesapeake, with that of St. Louis, on the Mississippi, has been suspended until this dispute is settled, although nearly two hundred miles of it have been already completed. So far, however, as questions of this

nature go, involving, as they do, the disbursement of the common revenue, the real source of the objection may be found in the mutual jealousy of the States; Maine, for instance, being unwilling that the common fund, to which she contributes, should be applied for the more immediate benefit of other sections of the Union. I must confess that there are good grounds for this jealousy, considering the propensity to jobbing discovered by the federal authorities. Indeed, in this respect, I have heard several Americans declare, that they believed their own government to be the most corrupt on earth. But it is not only on legislative points that the general government now and then finds itself at loggerheads with the States, the federal judiciary being frequently in conflict with the local tribunals. But more of this in its proper place. Enough has here been said to indicate how frequently local and federal jurisdiction so closely approximate that it is difficult to distinguish the line of their separation—and to show how easy it is for the Union to come in collision with its different parts; whilst it will appear from the rapid *coup-d'œil* which has thus been taken of the constitutional system in its twofold aspect, that the political organization of America, so far from being the simple thing which many suppose it to be, is a machine complicated in its structure, and delicate in its working.

It is not uncommon, in the annual messages through which the President communicates, at its opening, the condition of the country to Congress, to find it asserted that the experience of the Republic has already sufficed to demonstrate the efficiency of the principle of self-government. So far as it is applicable to the American people themselves, the assertion, perhaps,

cannot be impugned; but the proof which they have given of their aptitude for self-government cannot be taken as evidence of the stability of their present system. The dissolution of the Union would not necessarily imply the annihilation of the principle of self-government in America. That principle might, in new forms and under other manifestations, long survive the wreck of the confederacy. The question in which we are most interested, and that which is involved in the greatest doubt, has less to do with the maintenance of democratic institutions in America, than with the stability of the Federal Union. We fear that, in this respect, the experiences of the past are more pregnant with warning than suggestive of security. The Americans must bear in mind that their system, although it has withstood many, and some very rude, shocks, has not yet encountered danger in some of the most terrible forms in which it is competent to assail it. The ship that has withstood many a rough sea, and is capable of weathering many more, may perish in a moderate gale if her cargo shifts, or her ballast is disturbed. There is but little fear of the American system sustaining any very serious injury from external violence. The danger is that, whilst all is calm and serene without, the elements of disorder may be accumulating within. And this is not a danger which the Americans can afford to despise. Their constant exhortations to each other to regard the Union as paramount to all other political considerations, show that they appreciate the danger, and that they look upon the very greatness of the Confederation as, in itself, an element of peril, comprising, as it does, geographical distinctions which may be incompatible with permanent union, and a

diversity of interests which may yet prove an overmatch for patriotism. And should a serious shock come from within—should a mine be sprung beneath the capital itself—to what quarter could the general government resort with confidence for aid. A common object, or a common danger, may arm it with power for external action; but the Union has as yet afforded no evidence that, in the presence of internal convulsion, it would not prove itself a house of cards. Some years ago a mob assailed the State legislature in the capital of Pennsylvania, and the members had to fly for their lives. To quell the tumult the governor had to send to Philadelphia for detachments of militia, for he could place no reliance on the militia of Harrisburg and its vicinity, a moiety of whom were at least fellow-partizans with the rioters. Nor was the succour which he received from Philadelphia of the most reliable kind; a large proportion of the militia, in fact of the whole State, having party sympathies with the disturbers of the public peace, and being, therefore, not very likely to act with much energy against them. Luckily the commotion subsided before the cohesive powers of the commonwealth were put to the threatened test. And in what predicament would the federal executive find itself in the presence of a similar but more extended disaster. The United States army, even if faithful to the government, would have no more effect in quelling a popular outbreak, than the words of Canute had in checking the approaches of the sea. Would the government not find itself deserted on all hands, considering that at such a time political objects are, in a popular state, most readily subserved, by unscrupulous politicians, by siding with the people against

power in any shape? That this is not a mere fanciful danger is proved by historical events of a very recent period. In 1832, when South Carolina threatened to dissever the Union, her troops were exposed in daily parade in the streets of Charleston, side by side with those of the government, with whom the exciting events of each day might have brought them in collision. What a lesson is conveyed by this open, undisguised, and defiant preparation for resistance to the constituted authorities of the country! It is true that, in this instance, the central government was strong, because the turbulent State stood alone, the principles which she advocated being distasteful to the great mass of the people. Nullification, of which South Carolina was and still is the champion, was a doctrine odious to the vast majority of the American people; and the probability is, that had South Carolina ventured to carry it out by an insurrectionary movement, she would have been crushed in the attempt. But this no one can with certainty affirm, for, in a country like the United States, the consequences of a blow once struck, no matter from what cause or with what success at first, would be utterly unforeseen. It was the conviction of this which caused every friend of the Union to rejoice that the squabble, which convulsed the petty State of Rhode Island in 1842, was terminated without the intervention of United States troops. I do not say, that the constitution would not be proof against domestic convulsion, but with recent events still fresh in their recollection, even Americans can hardly assure themselves that it would be equal to such an emergency. They should remember, that although there may be

much in America to favour the growth and stability of the principle of self-government, the confederation, at least, is surrounded by many perils; and that, although democracy with them may be indestructible, there may, nevertheless, be quicksands at the foundations of the Union.

It was with a view to making adequate provision to meet all the dangers to which the federal system might be exposed, both from without and from within, that, in the early days of the republic, a party arose, who have since become so odious, under the designation of Federalists. Their object was to form a strong central government at Washington, not such as would swamp the legitimate authority of the States within their respective limits, but such as would consolidate the political system, by forming it into a more compact unity, with all its parts in proper subordination; and as would enable the general government to act with promptitude and vigour for its own protection, whenever its existence might be endangered by a revolutionary movement. It was in opposition to this party that was immediately organized that of the democratic republicans, headed by Mr. Jefferson, the "Apostle of Democracy," and basing itself upon the principle of State Rights, in contradistinction to that of centralization. In the eyes of those composing this party, the federal government was only a necessary evil, which must be endured, but which should not be strengthened. Their policy was, therefore, to reduce its authority to the lowest practicable point, and to prevent it from becoming dangerous by keeping it, as it were, in a state of constant political inanition. Besides, it would be alien, they contended, to the whole spirit in which

their institutions were conceived, to place any portion of the system beyond the reach of revolutionary action. The people's right to revolutionize their government at pleasure lies at the foundation of the whole system, and federalism, in its more odious sense, would be but a practical denial of that right. Thus were the parties originally, and thus have they ever since continued at issue, the one simply contending for so strengthening an indispensable feature in the political scheme, as to enable it, under all circumstances, to answer the purposes of its creation; the other resisting with the popular cry of State Rights, which the federalists never dreamt of invading, and which could only be compromised by pushing their doctrines to an extreme. They both equally professed a reverence for the Union, differing only in the price which they were willing to pay for what was admittedly so great a blessing. Their foresight has yet to be proved, and it will be well for the Union, when the day of trial arrives, if the apprehensions of now extinguished federalism are found to have been utterly groundless. These parties, in their more modern manifestation, are found amongst the Whigs and Democrats of the present day, the latter having no more spiteful epithet to hurl against the former than that of Federalist. It is true that a modern Whig as emphatically repudiates the charge of federalism, as a cavalier may be supposed to have denied the accusation of being a round-head. But there is little doubt, considering their more conservative character, of the Whigs, as a party, being the legitimate representatives of the Federalists.

Such being the perils which environ the Union, it is but right that we should now briefly inquire into

the nature of its guarantees. It must be confessed that these, when properly understood, are such as greatly diminish the dangers to which it would otherwise be inevitably exposed. Like the solar system, the Union is regulated in its complex and delicate working by the combined action of centripetal and centrifugal forces. But for the presence of the one it would not long withstand the disintegrating tendencies of the other. The federal system, in its simple form, unmixed with any other element of political existence, must ever be extremely difficult to sustain. The mutual jealousies and conflicting interests of its component parts, exercise a repelling influence, which it has not always sufficient cohesive power to resist. When States are bound together by no tie but the federal one, it is seldom that they remain long together without disturbing causes manifesting themselves to unsettle the foundations of their union. There is no national sentiment, embracing the entire confederation, to rally the people around it in a moment of danger, particularly when it is menaced not from without but from within. The inhabitants of each State give their first thoughts to their own State, and only such as they have then to spare to the confederation.

In framing the American constitution, the great object was to secure the benefits of a federal union, which would not be constantly liable to disintegration from the mutual jealousies, the conflicting interests, and the independent action of the several States. To effect this, the framers of the constitution most wisely intertwined the national with the federal principle, so that the people might exist at once in the double capacity of a united people, and of

a confederation of States. In its preamble, that instrument sets forth, not that the States of the Union, but that "We, the people of the United States," do establish and ordain, &c. Here the national principle is recognised and affirmed as lying at the foundation of the federal superstructure. It is as a federal body that the United States chiefly manifest themselves to the external world, but it is mainly as one people that their action is regulated. Were the Union purely federal, its legislative body would assume the federal type, representing, not the whole people, but the different States which they comprised. The executive too would be provided for by a totally different arrangement from that now prevailing. But the American executive is the representative of the entire American people in their collective national capacity. It is not this State that is this year entrusted with executive control, and that State the next, the executive government being constantly wielded by the whole people, without reference to their divisions into States, by their own representatives, springing, every four years, from their common suffrages. And precisely so with one of the branches of the legislature. The House of Representatives is not a body representing the different political communities of which the Union is composed, but the whole people of the Union, as if no such distinction existed between them. It is in the Senate, and in it alone, that we find the Union represented in its federal capacity, that body being composed of the delegates, not of the people, but of the States. But even in the Senate they do not vote as States, but *per capite*, as in the House of Representatives. The number of States being thirty, the Senate consists of

sixty members, there being two from each State. A vote may thus be carried by the senators from twenty-nine States dividing against each other, when both, or one of those representing the thirtieth, might turn the scale. Thus, even in the Senate, although they represent the States, they do not act by States. We see then that the executive, and one branch of the legislative power, are purely of national origin; whilst the other branch of the latter, which assumes a federal type, never carries it into action. The only occasion on which there is a purely federal action at Washington is, when the people having failed to elect a President, his election devolves upon the House of Representatives. The course of procedure in such a case has already been explained. The national principle is thus made to underlie the federal, in America, so that the different States, which appear to be merely set together in federal juxtaposition, like type bound together from without, are in reality amalgamated below, like stereotype.

There are thus two political states of existence in America, the national and the federal. It is the national principle which almost exclusively manifests itself in Washington, the federal being exhibited in the independent local action of the different States. This is the very reverse of what is generally the case with federal States. It is generally in their federal capacity that they act externally, leaving the national principle to erect itself at home. The consequence is, that there are generally displayed great weakness and indecision, when promptness and vigour are required—conflicting nationalities frequently interfering with general action. In America, the national feeling, particularly so far as external action is con-

cerned, is all with the Union, which is so embodied as to enable it to act, not as a number of States working in concert, but as one great power. This is that which renders it almost impregnable to all external assaults. The chief danger to it, as already intimated, is from within. The two principles cannot co-exist in active development, without the most perfect system of checks to keep them from encroaching on each other. The national principle could only predominate at the expense of State sovereignty and independence; whilst the federal principle, if pushed to an extreme, would tend to cripple all national action. It was evidently for an extension of the one that the Federalists contended, whilst the States' Rights party rallied in maintenance of the other. These parties being now, properly speaking, extinct, none daring to avow himself favourable to any further extension of the national principle, the chief source of peril is in the conflicting material interests of the different sections of the confederacy. But storms from within would be much more potent for mischief, were it not for the extent to which the national principle obtains. The Americans divide themselves into States only for local purposes; for all other objects, they regard themselves, and feel, as one united people. Their first affections, therefore, are for the Union, their next, for their respective localities. They are less like different States uniting for a common object than like one people dividing into States for particular local objects. To tear them asunder, therefore, will require a greater force than generally suffices to dissolve the flimsy connexion which binds together different States, having but few sympathies in common, or perhaps cherishing mutual

antipathies, but which enter into a federal tie as a mere political expedient. No force can do it short of that which can rend a nation asunder. In the case of America, that force can only come from within, and nothing but the conflict of material interests is likely to set it in motion. Should a really serious demonstration from this quarter be once made, how far the central government is capable of resisting it has been already briefly considered. There is no question but that the national sentiment cherished by the American people serves to postpone the crisis, or but that, should it ever arise, that sentiment would form the only source of strength to the executive government.

Nullification having been incidentally alluded to, a brief explanation of its nature and objects will not here be out of place. When the dispute between South Carolina and the central government was pending, the whole question of general and local powers was opened up and discussed. Two parties sprung up in the South, particularly in the State just mentioned, entertaining strong views of the powers and rights of the different States. The one party were known as the Nullifiers, the other as the Seceders. The Nullifiers maintained that when an act of the general legislature was in manifest violation of the constitution, each State being for itself the judge as to whether it was so or not, and directly inimical to the interests of a State, that State had the power, *quoad* itself, to annul the act, and to prevent it from being carried into execution within its limits. Thus South Carolina contended that she had the power and the right, whenever the circumstances seemed to her to warrant it, to prevent the United

States tariff from being in force in the port of Charleston. The chief answer to this was, that all acts of Congress were valid, unless unconstitutional, and that the Supreme Court of the United States was the sole judge as to whether they were unconstitutional or not. It followed that, until they were pronounced to be unconstitutional by the only competent tribunal, no State could resist their execution. If this were so, the interests of a State might be trampled in the dust by acts which came within the letter of the constitution, when, unless it had some means of defending itself, it would be utterly remediless. This consideration gave rise to the Secession party, who contended that, when the federal connexion became manifestly injurious to the interests of any section of the American people inhabiting a State, they might withdraw entirely from the Union of their own accord. To this it was replied that, although the constitution was ratified by the States, as States, it could not be rescinded by one without the consent of all. Others again contended that, although the constitution, which is the symbol of the Union, was ratified by the States, that form of ratification did not alter its essential character as a document emanating, not from the States, but from the whole people as one people, and binding them together as one, without necessary reference to their division into States. From this it would follow, that it could not be rescinded by the States, as States, but by the people of all the States, as one people.

Before concluding this chapter a brief inquiry into the expenses of the American government, with a view to contrasting them with those of the government of this country, may be neither uninteresting nor uninstructive. For the four years ending June

30, 1846, the average annual expenditure of the United States, exclusive of payments on account of the public debt, was twenty-two millions of dollars, or 4,950,000*l.* say, 5,000,000*l.* sterling. For the same period, our average annual expenditure, exclusive of payments on account of the public debt, was 22,000,000*l.* sterling. The American people being now about twenty millions, their expenditure for army, navy, ordnance, pensions, civil contingencies, and foreign intercourse, in short, for everything but the debt, amounts to about 5*s.* sterling per head. We, being about thirty millions of people, have to pay 14*s.* 8*d.* sterling per head, to defray the expenses of the State, exclusive of the debt; that is to say, for the mere expenses of government, we pay absolutely between four and five times as much as the American; and, individually, nearly three times as much. When the debt of both countries is thrown into the scale, this difference is, of course, greatly increased; inasmuch as we pay yearly, as interest upon our debt, more than the whole principal of the debt of America, even after the war, amounts to.

But it may be urged that this comparison is not fair, inasmuch as in the case of America, no account is taken of the expense of the State governments. It is quite true that the yearly expenditure for the support of the general government is not the sum-total which the Americans have to pay as the expenses of government. It is but proper, therefore, that, in comparing the expenditure of the two countries, the expense of the State government in America should be superadded to that of the general government.

There being no less than thirty different States,

with thirty local political systems to support; that is to say, thirty executives, thirty legislatures, thirty judiciary systems, and thirty different groups of miscellaneous *et ceteras*, connected with thirty different governments to provide for, one might naturally suppose that the aggregate expense of all this would greatly exceed that incurred to support the general government. But the expense of all the State governments taken together does not exceed five millions and a half of dollars, which is but a trifle over a million and a quarter sterling. This added to the 5,000,000*l.* for the support of the general government, gives 6,125,000*l.* as the aggregate cost of government, both general and local in America. This makes the cost per head of government in America, exclusive of the debt, 6*s.* 3*d.* sterling, to contrast with 14*s.* 8*d.*, the cost per head of the government of England, exclusive of her debt. The Mexican war has materially enhanced the American debt, but even with this addition, it does not exceed 20,000,000*l.* The annual interest upon this will be, even at the rate paid by America, little more than 1,000,000*l.** So that, taking into view the taxation imposed for the payment of the interest of the debt, the tax per head will not exceed 7*s.* 6*d.* sterling. More than this may be raised for some years to come to pay off the principal of the debt, but it is not necessary to take any extra efforts of this kind into the calculation. If we add, in the case of England, the taxation necessary for the pay-

* The State debts are not included, because the sums borrowed have been invested in works, which are already in some cases wholly, and in others partly, paying, and will soon in all cases wholly pay the interest upon them.

ment of the annual interest upon the debt to that raised for the ordinary expenses of government, it gives us no less than 1*l.* 14*s.* as the proportion paid per head. That is to say, taking every thing into account, on both sides, we pay more than four and a half times per head as much as the Americans pay in the way of taxation.

But some may urge that we have not only an imperial government, but also from thirty to forty colonial governments to sustain. But if, in addition to the general government we have the governments of thirty or forty colonies to support, let it be remembered that the Americans have also their general government, with thirty local, certainly, not colonial, governments to sustain. They may differ in name from our colonies, but they occupy an analogous position to that occupied by the colonies, so far as this question is concerned. The Englishman pays for his imperial and his colonial governments, the American for his imperial and state governments. Englishmen pay four millions sterling for the government of from thirty to forty Colonies, Americans pay about a million and a quarter sterling for the local government of thirty States. The Colonies contain an aggregate population of five millions—the States, one of twenty millions. But the four millions paid by the imperial government is only half what it takes to support the government of the Colonies, the other half being defrayed by the colonists themselves. It thus takes eight millions sterling to govern five millions of colonists; and as England pays one-half of this sum, she may be said to pay four millions sterling for governing two millions and a half of colonists. She thus pays at the rate of 1*l.* 12*s.*

for the government of each colonist—more than double what it costs her to govern a subject at home; for we have already seen that 14*s.* 8*d.* was the cost per head of government to Englishmen, exclusive of the interest on the debt, and, indeed, including the four millions expended upon the Colonies. Whilst the cost of governing an English colonist is 1*l.* 12*s.* that of governing an American citizen in his own State is, on an average, 1*s.* 3*d.* per head per annum. Thus the cost to the American citizen of administering the local affairs of his State, is about one twenty-fifth part that which it costs for the administration of the affairs of an English colonist. There is, therefore, but little that tells in favour of our system, when we take its colonial element into account.

But the proportion borne by what is paid per head by the Americans, as the expenses of government, to that which is paid per head by us in the same way, is annually diminishing: inasmuch as, whilst the American people are rapidly increasing in numbers, their expenditure exhibits but little tendency to increase at all. It is quite true that their yearly expenditure is now much greater than it was in the earlier days of the Confederation, but it is not materially increased now beyond what it was fifteen years ago. During the four years ending 1836, the average annual expenditure of the United States' government was a little above twenty-one millions of dollars. During the four ending 1846, it was, as we have already seen, about twenty-two millions. In 1835 the population of America did not exceed fifteen millions—it now exceeds twenty. We thus see that twenty millions of people pay little, if any, more for

their government than fifteen millions did about thirteen years ago. Thus, although the expenditure, if it does not remain stationary, is but slightly increased, the burden of taxation upon the individual is rapidly diminishing; and there is no reason why, when the population of America is thirty millions, which it will be fifteen years hence, the expenses of its government should increase beyond its present figure. If it does not, the burden of taxation on each individual in 1863, will be only half what it was in 1835. What prospect have we of any such relief as this, considering how much it is the tendency of the times with us to increase instead of diminishing our expenditure? Since 1835 it has increased by about ten millions; and although, in deference to the universal clamour now raised for reduction, some trifling diminution may be effected, yet even that relief, trifling though it will be, will be but temporary, it being the interest of the tax-spending class to have as much of the public money pass through their fingers as possible. We delude ourselves in expecting any permanent improvement in this respect, until the tax-paying class exercise a more direct control over the spending of the taxes.

But why should this improvement not take place? Is it necessary that England should have a government inordinately expensive, to have a government sufficiently good? The American government is cheaply administered, and in what particular is it wanting? No one can charge the general government with any want of efficiency in the administration of the foreign affairs of the Confederation. Its internal government is adequately provided for by its State, or local authorities. Life and property are as secure there as here. If there is less security in the

South than in the North, so is there in Ireland than in Great Britain, although we have in Ireland, in aid of the military, a civil force greater than the whole military force of America. View them which way you will, the contrast of the American system with our own is, as regards its expenditure at least, eminently unfavorable to us. This should not be; for there is no reason why England should not have as good a government as any other country, at as cheap a rate.

Having thus hurriedly glanced at the leading features of the political system of America; having shown the basis on which it rests, and the principles which regulate the action and the distribution of its powers; having drawn attention to what are considered by some to be its weaker points, and exhibited the party distinctions which have originated in the contradictory construction of some of its provisions, the reader has probably anticipated me in noticing the grand difference which exists between the British and American Constitutions. At the basis of the former is power, from the spoils of which the superincumbent fabric of popular liberty has been reared; power still retaining all the franchises and prerogatives not conceded by it;—at the foundation of the latter, is popular liberty, the necessities of which have called power into existence; power in this case, however, wielding no more authority than has been conceded to it. Liberty in England has been wrung from power—power in America has arisen out of liberty. In the one case, power has been fettered that freedom might expand; in the other, freedom has been restricted that power might exist. Without his charters, the Englishman would have no freedom of action—without his constitutions, the American

would have no restraint upon his. It is by deeds of concession that the people in England vindicate their liberty—it is by deeds of concession that power in America vindicates its authority.*

* Since the foregoing was written, I perceive that Mr. M'Gregor, in a letter addressed to the people of Glasgow, has stated, *inter alia*, that, taking into account the total taxation, general and local, to which they are subjected, the Americans are far from being a moderately-taxed people. He cannot, by this, have intended to convey the idea that there was anything like an equality of taxation between them and ourselves. In case, however, some should draw such an inference from a statement of this kind, proceeding from so distinguished a source, I shall present the reader with a comparison of the total taxation of one of the most highly-taxed States in the Union, with the total taxation of Great Britain and Ireland. For the sake of comparison, the population of New York may be taken at 3,000,000, and that of the United Kingdom at 30,000,000. The population of New York is about a seventh that of the whole Union. Taking 29,000,000 of dollars as the expenditure of the General Government in 1846, including the interest of the debt and other charges, New York would contribute the seventh, or say 4,130,000 dollars. The total taxation of the State, for the same year, for state, county, and town purposes, fell under 4,000,000. But, taking the round sum, this gives 8,130,000 dollars as the total taxation, paid during that year, by the 3,000,000 of people inhabiting New York. Reduced to sterling money, this sum amounts to about 1,690,000*l.*, or 11*s.* per head. The New Yorkers thus pay actually less per head for the support of the General Government, the interest of the general debt, the support of the State Government, and for all local and municipal purposes, than we were last year called upon to pay for the support of our military establishments alone! The gross revenue of this country for last year exceeded 60,000,000*l.* If to this be added, the local taxation of the three kingdoms, their total taxation, for all purposes, general and local, is not over-estimated at 80,000,000*l.* This, distributed over 30,000,000 of people, gives 2*l.* 13*s.* as the taxation per head in this country, which is nearly five times as great as the taxation per head, for all purposes, in New York.

It is quite possible that the Americans are not moderately taxed, and that there is room, with them as with us, for financial reform; but it is, at the same time, very evident that, taking the whole of their taxation into account, they are, as compared with us, a *very moderately-taxed people.*

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FEDERAL LEGISLATURE.

The American Congress.—The House of Representatives.—Heterogeneous Materials of which it is composed.—Proceedings in the House.—Confusion which sometimes prevails.—Occasional Impressiveness of the Proceedings.—Delays in the transaction of Business.—Causes of this.—Position of a Member with regard to his Constituents.—The "Gag-law."—Style of American Oratory.—Love of Imagery.—The American Eagle.—Declension of American Oratory from its pristine grandeur.—"Scenes" in the House.—Divisions.—The Senate.—Description of that Body.—Appearance of the Senate as a Deliberative Body.—The Senate, the Conservative element in the Constitution.—Secret of its Power.—Comparison in this respect between it and the House of Lords.—Mode in which Members are addressed.—Reflections caused thereby.—Comparison between the two Houses.—Cause of the great difference in character between them.

My stay in Washington afforded me frequent opportunities of attending the deliberations of Congress. The debates and resolutions of this body have now obtained a world-wide importance, whilst its attitude and demeanour excite interest and attract attention. Like everything else in America, much that is fabulous has been written about it, as well as much that is true; and by the majority on this side of the Atlantic, the picture is too apt to be viewed on its unfavourable side. I have regularly attended the discussions of Congress for months, during which time questions of the highest interest, both of a foreign and domestic character, were debated within its walls, and may, therefore, without egotism, consider myself competent to convey an honest, if not a

very vivid impression of it, to the mind of the reader. It is said that there is nothing so solemn but has its ludicrous side; and if I wanted to find subjects for caricature, with which to amuse, there is little doubt but that the Capitol might furnish me with material. My object is to present a truthful picture, amusing peradventure, in parts, but as instructive as the truth can render it throughout. In dealing with America, the reader has been long enough amused by different writers, at the expense of his confidence. It is high time that portraiture superseded caricature.

The constitution and functions of the two Houses of Congress having been considered in the previous chapter, the object now is to present them in their very action and aspect; and if the reader will again accompany me, we will first proceed together into the House of Representatives.

In addition to the public gallery, which takes the semicircular sweep of the chamber, and that set apart for the private friends of members, the floor of the House is frequently thrown open for the accommodation of strangers. Being admitted to the privilege of the floor, we shall take our station in the vicinity of the chair, as being the best position, perhaps, both for seeing and hearing what is going on.

The hall, as already described, has a dark and dingy appearance even on the brightest day. It is but ill lighted for so vast a space, and its sombreness is increased by the darkened colouring of its appointments and decorations.

From the point you occupy you have a good *coup-d'œil* of the whole House. Face to face with you are the representatives of the Union, the aggregate result of the last electoral fermentation.

It is true, they are a motley assembly; but how could they be otherwise, when you consider whence they are drawn? There is a representative from Maine, his fresh complexion and hardy frame bespeaking him from the North, where his constituents are now clothed in furs; there again is one, from whose body the hot suns of Alabama have nearly dissipated all the juices, except that of tobacco, with which he is at this moment overflowing; behind him sits a member from beyond the Alleganies, aye even from beyond the Mississippi, in whose keen eye, wrinkled face, and general quickness of movement, you can read whole stories of adventurous life in the Far West; while close beside you is the languid Carolinian, accustomed to have everything done for him at his nod. And what pages in the history of the Union may be read in the varied physiognomy of the House! In the assembly before you, of two hundred men or thereabouts, you can readily trace the dark hair and eye, and the high cheek-bone of the Celt, the sleek and rotund contour of the Saxon, the ponderous outline of the Dutchman, the phlegmatic temperament of the German, the olive hue of the Spaniard, and the nimble figure of the Frank. It is a true reflex of the great busy mass without, scattered far and wide for thousands of miles from where you stand. It is at once a type of the past and the future of America. In the representatives of the American people, you have an epitome of the story of their ancestry, and a clue to that of their posterity. In one respect the scene rises to the dignity of a moral phenomenon. You have different races, with all their diversified habits, predilections, histories, creeds, and traditions; you have the representatives of almost every country

in Europe living together, not a paralytic life, but a life of constant industry and active competition, and regulating their political existence by the machinery of a constitutional and democratic regime. In one sense, truly, you have a congress of nations in this Congress of the United States.

The House is certainly, on a general view, wanting in that polish which characterizes the corresponding chamber in St. Stephen's. But one would be disappointed to find it otherwise, when he considers that those who compose it vary as much in their occupations and positions in life as they do in their lineage and physiognomy. There are but few men of independent fortune, or of any scholastic attainments amongst them. You have the merchant and the manufacturer, who have come from their mills and counting-houses to the work of legislation. You have the lawyer; you have the cotton-grower and the sugar-grower; the owner of labour, and the man who hires it, and who even labours for himself. There is a large sprinkling, too, of farmers, whose rough hands have just relinquished the plough, that their unpolished tongues might have a swing in Congress. It is not necessary to be an independent man to be a representative, where men are paid for the labour of legislation; or to be over-refined, to be a delegate from a section of the country where refinement would be as much an offence as it is a rarity. But for the principle of paying men to legislate, it would be impossible for many of those before you to undertake a Washington campaign. To some of them the eight dollars a day, given in consideration of Congressional duties, is positive wealth. But many of these men are burly fellows, who make up in dogged honesty

what they may want in refinement and manners. Nor is the House entirely composed of this unhewn material. There are classic columns, with noble Corinthian capitals, in the moral, as in the physical structure of the Capitol. A close inspection of the mass before you will show that there are many glittering veins, not mere tinsel, but of genuine metal, which permeate its different stratifications. True, that hon. member from one of the Southern counties of Ohio, would be none the worse of another button on his coat; it would be no impeachment of the republican simplicity of his neighbour from Indiana, if the other side of his shirt-collar were visible; nor would it transform that restless-looking being from Arkansas into an enemy of the Constitution, if his hat were brushed with what remains of the fur, instead of against it, as it appears to have been. But the picture has its lights as well as its shadows. Intermingled with the rest, are men both of dress and address, and such as would in every way pass muster very creditably in any assembly on earth. Amongst those on the Speaker's left, it is easy to distinguish, from his elevated manner and gentlemanly bearing, Mr. Winthrop (since elected Speaker), the member for Boston; from his ease and dignity of deportment, Mr. Grinnell from New Bedford; and on the right of the chair, from his calm and student-like attitude, Mr. Seddon, from the capital of Virginia. These are but specimens of dozens around them, who bring to the House minds as cultivated as they are polished in exterior, and who may well bear comparison with the many foreigners who, in common with yourself, occupy the floor; amongst whom are several members of the *corps diplomatique*, and secretaries and attachés

to the different legations. Nor is *bonhommie* wanting in the picture. There are many with "lean and hungry" looks, many of atrabilious temperaments, impassive souls, and gloomy dispositions; but there are others with jolly faces and rotund proportions, which remind one very much of some of the characteristics of John Bull.

Not far from Mr. Ingresoll, of Pennsylvania, who has scarcely yet recovered from the excitement consequent on his libellous attack on Mr. Webster, sits Mr. King from St. Lawrence county, New York, his sides at this moment shaking with laughter, although it is difficult to perceive that anything very jocose is transpiring around him. A little to his left, and turned up to the skylight, is the good-humoured face of Mr. Pendleton, familiarly known as the "Lone Star," being the only Whig in the whole delegation of Virginia; whilst standing on the floor, near the central entrance, very short of stature, and very boyish in appearance, but both kind and communicative, is Judge Douglas from Illinois, apparently incapable of disturbing the dust beneath his feet, but sometimes raising quite a hubbub with that tongue of his, which occasionally emits very fiery material. The assembly then, like all other assemblies of the kind, is a mixed one—not being one of perfect gentlemen, in the conventional sense, because there are many gentlemen in it; nor one entirely composed of boors, because many of those present remind you of trees with the bark on. The picture is as varied as such pictures generally are, although it may want the exquisite finish of a line engraving. Overhanging the members, and peering in mid-air in groups, from between the massive

pillars, are the sovereign people, with a wakeful eye upon the conduct of their delegates. With us, hon. members keep their hats on, and strangers are obliged to uncover; but in Washington, strangers in the public gallery keep their hats on, whilst hon. members sit uncovered below. Like the "gods" at either of the "Nationals," the occupants of the gallery present a perfect cloud of downward looking faces, most of which are shrouded to the eyebrows in hats, in all forms and styles, and in all stages of decomposition. From the opposite gallery, behind the chair, and directly overhead from where you stand, bright eyes, set in sweet smiling faces, are watching with a sort of bewildered interest all that is going on below.

The House is not, as with us, divided into two distinct and opposite sides. Whigs and Democrats manage to sit very friendlily together, without having the table and the whole width of the floor between them. There is no ministerial bench, simply because ministers have no more right to be there than you have; nor is there an opposition bench, to be occupied by a heterogeneous phalanx of fault-finders, like the medley of protectionists, conservatives, chartists, confederationists, and repealers, who now flank the table on the Speaker's left in the House of Commons. You can never estimate the strength of parties by looking at the House. Friends and enemies, they sit all together; and it is only when a member gets upon his legs that a stranger can discover his political bias. As a general rule, the floor on the right of the Speaker is chiefly occupied by those who support the administration, but it is a very ordinary thing to see Whigs in the very heart of the enemy's camp, and Democrats wandering from their sphere, and getting lost amid the Whig constellations.

As we enter the Hall there is some one speaking, but, from the multitude of points against which the sound is broken, the reverberations are so confused that it is some time ere you can exactly fix upon the spot from which the speaker is addressing the House. This is all the more difficult from the confusion which prevails upon the floor, and the noises which are constantly breaking out all over the House. The orator is straining every nerve to be heard, but in vain. Sometimes his voice lapses into a perfect screech, but to no purpose; he might as well try to be heard on the raging beach, as to get audible utterance in the midst of that unceasing hubbub and concatenation of all conceivable sounds, which rise and swell from the body of the House, and break into petty, but multitudinous echoes against the galleries, pillars, capitals, and cornices which decorate it. The Speaker's efforts to command silence are praiseworthy, but useless. The ring of his bell, or the knock of his hammer, may cause a lull for an instant, like the momentary cessation of the roar in Cheapside, but the hubbub rises and swells again immediately as before. Such as are desirous of hearing what the gentleman has to say, who is in pursuit of oratory under such difficulties, gather round him in a group, leaving the rest to pursue their different avocations in the distance. And a rather unruly set the rest are on such occasions—some of them walking about and talking in groups on the floor, others taking it comfortably in their arm-chairs, and holding an animated conversation, sometimes over three or four rows of desks with each other. In the midst of all this confusion I could distinguish one noise which at first puzzled me exceedingly. It differed from every

other ingredient in the acoustic medley, and gave me at first the idea that many of the members were amusing themselves by constantly firing small pistols in the House. I had heard and read much that made me think that they might thus be practising with blank cartridge in case of need, and had scarcely given myself credit for this brilliant conclusion when I was undeceived by an apparent explosion close to my ear. The truth is, that each member has his own desk, to which is appended his own proper name—being found in all sorts of stationary and Sheffield penknives *à discrétion*, at the public expense. Here then he transacts much of his private business, and writes all his private letters; thus judiciously blending together his public and private duties in a manner which makes both agreeable to him. The members have a post-office of their own contiguous to the Hall; and whenever one of them has a letter to send to the post-office, or a motion or an amendment to submit to the Chair, he strikes the flat surface of the paper with all his force upon the polished mahogany before him, which produces the noise alluded to, and which fifty echoes seem to stand waiting on tiptoe to catch up and scatter all over the house. Nor is this done from mere mischief, for it at once summons one of several boys to his side, whose business it is to carry the documents to the Chair, or to the post-office, according to their destination.

As nearly all the members are sometimes writing, and all want the boys at once, and as the boys cannot be everywhere at one and the same moment, the choruses of summonses with which they are saluted resemble platoon firing, with the small instruments of offence already alluded to. These boys are quite

a feature in the *coup-d'œil* of the house. When they have a moment's rest they frequently meet on the vacant space on the floor in front of the table; where they sometimes amuse themselves with pantomimic gesticulations, not altogether compatible with the dignity of the House. More than once, when something had occurred to disturb their equanimity, have I seen two of them meet and shake their heads at each other, accompanying the action with a by-play, which unmistakably indicated a mutual castigation as soon as the forms of the House would permit. I mention this merely as illustrative of the confusion which sometimes prevails, and of which the urchins in question manage to take advantage. In short, the House generally looks like an assembly about to be called to order, with somebody in the chair having no legitimate right to be there, but merely occupying it for the moment to try how it feels.

There are many to whom it will at once suggest itself, that this departure from the decorum of a deliberative assembly is not peculiar to Washington. The House of Commons, if not as systematically so, is frequently quite as unruly. And there is this difference in favour of the House of Representatives, —that, however indifferent they may be to an orator, they never try to put him down. They may not listen to his eloquence, but they never attempt to smother it.

Disorderly as it generally is, I have been in the Hall, when, though crowded, it was as still as death, when a pin might almost be heard drop upon the carpet, and when order reigned along all its benches. Never, in my experience, was this transformation from its usual character so complete or so impressive,

as when, from the table of the House, was read the correspondence between Mr. Pakenham and Mr. Buchannan, in which the former offered, in the name of his government, and the latter refused, on behalf of his, to submit the Oregon question to friendly arbitration. It was then that even the most sanguine began to relinquish their hopes of peace, and the dispute looked really serious. The House was crowded in every part, and not a sound disturbed the death-like silence which pervaded the Chamber, save the voice of the clerk, as he read the documents in their order; which, in reply to a resolution, had just been communicated to the House. There was then but one speaker, whilst all were listeners; whereas, generally, none are listening whilst all are speaking.

Nor does it always require so impressive an occasion to command this change for the better. As with us, there are some men who never speak but they are listened to. These are generally men of influence in the national councils and men of eloquence in debate. It is refreshing in the midst of so much inane and wearisome talk, to listen to a speech that is at once temperate and eloquent. But it must be confessed that these are like angels' visits, nine-tenths of the speeches delivered being as illogical in their structure as they are inflated in their style.

Were the House of Representatives as numerous as is the House of Commons, it would be impossible ever to get through with any work at all. Every member of the former feels that it is his bounden duty to speak. Such appears to him to be the first and the last object for which he is sent to Washington, the Alpha and the Omega of his representative responsibilities on the federal stage. A silent

member is a luxury which the House may know in time. No matter how punctual he may be in his daily attendance in the Capitol; no matter how earnestly he watches the progress of the debate, or how invariably his name is found in the division lists; if he does not open his mouth, his constituents fancy that they have got a *cadavre* to represent them, and he may find his silence inimical to his prospects. Each member is thus compelled, as it were, to expose what is in him, and selects as many opportunities of doing so as he can. A regular talking member is a catch for a constituency. His prowess, in this respect, in the House, magnifies them in their own eyes; for, looking on from a distance, they take it for granted that he influences the House, which, by logical consequence, gives them great influence over the legislation of the country. So long as constituents will thus exact speeches, and members find speechification the readiest way of retaining favour, there will be no lack of it in the legislative halls. Almost every member manages, once during a session, to make what he designs as his culminating effort, which being duly reported, is read by his constituents and by them alone. Indeed, it is spoken for them, and it is his consolation that they will canvass it, if the House does not listen to it. He generally reports it at length for the papers himself, and it answers his purpose if it appear even months after it has been delivered. It is the great proof that he has been faithful to his trust; and it is sometimes printed in pamphlet form, and sent down by the bushel to the country, as a solace to his friends and confusion to his enemies. It is singular, too, to watch the adroitness with which each manages to connect his own locality, by some peculiar tie, with every great question which excites

the attention of the House; thus endearing himself all the more with his constituents, by giving them the most affecting proof that their interests will not be lost sight of, whatever may be the excess of his patriotism. When constituencies begin to feel that there are other modes in which their interests may be subserved than by seeking for their representative a mere talking machine, there will be more work and less speaking done in the House, and the style of oratory will improve in proportion. Little else can be expected but rant, where speaking is done to order.

Not only have members a desire to be thus frequently upon their legs, but, having once got upon them, they would forget to sit down but for the "gag law," which limits each member to an hour. It was to prevent speeches of a week in length that this very salutary rule was applied. It was at one time thought advisable to extend it to the Senate, but on Mr. Benton letting it be understood that he would hold any man personally responsible who would attempt to gag him, the design was not persevered in. In the Lower House the evil thus provided against had grown to be so enormous, that, for their mutual comfort, members at length submitted to be generally plugged. Some affect to regard the process as a degrading one; but as the stream of words would flow on, what alternative was left? Often have I seen a syllogism fairly winged by a word from the Speaker, announcing that the hour was up; and many a fine trope and metaphor have been crushed and mangled by the fall of his hammer, preparatory to his making the fatal announcement.

In its style, American oratory is totally different from anything ever listened to in our legislative

assemblies. The debates of the House of Commons are dry, business-like, and practical, even to a fault; the speeches delivered there not being cast in scholastic models, with lengthy exordiums and elaborate perorations. Here members grapple with their subject at once, dispose of it, and resume their seats. It is not so in Washington. There a speech is delivered, not so much with a view to elucidate the subject, as to making a speech, and it is as ingeniously contrived, and elaborately prepared, as if it were destined, beyond all doubt, to take a prominent part in the political literature of the country. In St. Stephen's, tropes and metaphors are only tolerated from a few, and by these they are but sparingly used; in the Capitol, speeches are made gaudy with excess of imagery, and their point and strength are sacrificed to the frippery of words. No matter what may be the point at issue, their range is generally as illimitable as the speaker's fancy. The bill before the House may be for the better regulation of the Post-office, but that does not deter a member speaking upon it from commencing with the discoveries of Columbus, and ending with the political exigencies of his own township. This discursive tendency is the worst feature in American oratory; it renders the debates wearisome and pointless, sometimes producing a good essay, but never a good speech. The defect would not be so hopeless, were the inflation of the language used, or the quantity of imagery resorted to, at all proportioned to the subject in dispute. But I have often been amazed at the utter prodigality of bombast, the absolute extravagance of metaphor, with which the treatment of a very petty point was overloaded. When once let loose upon

this discursive field, the American orator seems to lose all self-control; his fancy is then like a wild horse scampering over an illimitable prairie. The Americans themselves are keenly alive to this defect in their public speaking, but it is much easier to deplore than it is to eradicate it.

The figures which are most fondly resorted to, are those in which the American Eagle acts a very prominent part. This poor bird has a very hard life of it, and it is high time that his case were taken in hand by the "Animals' Friend Society." Not that they mean him any harm, poor bird! but that they never give him any rest, keeping him in the constant performance of the most extraordinary gyrations, putting him in the most unenviable positions, and sometimes making him act the most incompatible parts at one and the same time. How often have I heard an excited orator conjure him up in all his inflated dimensions, and with expanded wing send him sweeping over the length and breadth of the continent which he proudly claimed as his own! On how many lofty rocks is he not daily made to perch! What imperial panoramas are not constantly stretched beneath his feet! How he is made to soar above all other eagles, with one head or with two; and how the poor earth-bound British Lion is made to tremble at the very shadow of his flight! The poor o'erlaboured bird! He is painted in so many different colours, and put in so many unaccountable positions, that it is a miracle if he preserves his identity and continues to know himself. Nor is he always sent on the most unexceptionable of missions. Frequently have I heard him commissioned to gobble up the "whole of Oregon," without asking any questions for conscience

sake; and often is he confidentially informed, that he will one day be let fly at Canada, as the hawk used to be let slip at the pigeon. He is at this moment gorging himself with Mexico, having Cuba and the other West India islands in prospect as a dessert. It is no wonder that an hon. senator should express his fear in the Senate that they were rapidly transforming him into an obscene bird of prey. His case is a very pitiable one, and I have often wondered that some of his more considerate admirers have not interposed between him and the oratorical martyrdom with which he is threatened. Is compassion dead in New England? or is benevolence effete in Philadelphia?

How fallen in its general character is American oratory from its pristine grandeur! The days were when Philadelphia was the forum, and humanity the audience—when patriots spoke in periods of scathing eloquence, and the world, with breath retained and ear erect, stood listening to their words. But these were times when great principles were in dispute; when topics were discussed which concerned man in his universal capacity, and in which man, therefore, universally took an interest. Now, however, these principles are admitted—these topics are disposed of—the rights of humanity are no longer problematic; they are acknowleged axioms in America. The platform has become contracted; questions of a minor character and of mere local importance have superseded the grand, broad and universal theses, which distinguished the debates of the first "Continental Congress." The orators of that time could be eloquent without being ornate; they brandished the flaming words of truth, instead of wandering as their

successors do in mazes of overwrought metaphor and inane imagery. The exciting questions of the revolutionary era have passed away, leaving nothing behind them for consideration but points of ordinary humdrum legislation. And the orator of the present day should suit himself to his circumstances. It has not fallen to his lot to discuss abstract propositions, the depth and breadth of which were such as to enable the speakers on them in former times to command the ear of humanity; but to apply his mind to matters of routine, and to questions which affect only his countrymen. His is a practical mission, and his should be a practical style. Appropriateness is the perfection of speech-making. To get poetical over a bank bill is evidently a mistake; to jumble imagery and statistics together, a want of judgment and a defect in taste.

In the list of American statesmen, several are to be found whose style of speaking is an exception to that of the great bulk of American orators, and who sometimes, when addressing themselves to constitutional questions, carry their hearers back in imagination to the days of Randolph and Patrick Henry. And in summing up this digression on American oratory, let me add, that in the House of Commons we should be none the worse for a slight infusion of American fancy into our dry discussions; whilst in the Capitol they would be all the better for a liberal adaptation to their debates of the practical style which characterizes ours.

It is to the inexpressible relief of those in the habit of frequenting the House of Commons, that anything arises, during the course of the evening, savouring of a "scene." How drowsy members wake

up from their semi-torpid state, and how their languid countenances light up with interest, when some incautious word, or ill-advised expression, gives rise to a personal episode in the dull, dull debate! Talk of the excitement of the cockpit! that dignified arena never presented anything half so stirring and amusing as the intellectual fisticuffs in St. Stephen's. Fancy, reader, the assembled representatives of England looking on, whilst Roebuck and Disraeli were bespattering each other with as much filth as they could command! When is the House so full as when a "scene" is expected? When was it that members used to come rushing in scores from the Clubs, or that Bellamy's poured forth its throngs, unmindful of half-consumed steaks, and regardless of unfinished pints of port? It was when Disraeli, in his intellectual jaundice, was vomiting forth bile at Peel. Why, even the great orator from Edinburgh himself could not command such a house as did, on these occasions, the hon. member for Shrewsbury. But when Peel was expelled from office, Disraeli was driven out of his element. Peel in power used to rouse him to the sublime in personality—Peel in opposition does not tempt him to the effort. Not that the hon. gentleman is not, in his intellectual temperament, quite as bilious as ever, but there is little at present to excite his bile. The rattle-snake must have something to bite, ere the poison will distil from its fangs. And Roebuck is no longer present to lash, with his scorpion whip, the Irish landlords into fury. For some time, at least, the House must trust for occasional amusement to Henry Grattan and Sir Benjamin Hall.

In this particular, our cousins in the Capitol

exhibit the weaknesses of their European kinsmen. They have their scenes, and they love them too. They are sometimes, perhaps, of a more boisterous character than we would like to see imitated at home; but they are frequently of the harmless and amusing kind. Tradition speaks of some which have resulted in personal *rencontres* on the floor of the House; one of which, described to me by an eye-witness, ended in the discharge of a pistol, which missed its aim, but lodged its contents in the door-keeper. I never witnessed a tragedy in the House of Representatives, but have seen many a farce there. To the credit of the House, scenes of the serious character alluded to are now almost entirely traditional. Hard words, very hard, are sometimes passed from member to member; but they generally reserve any breaches of the peace, which they may meditate, for Bladensburg, or some other point out of the jurisdiction of Congress. Of those which I witnessed, the scene which made the greatest impression upon me, was rather of the melancholy type. The occasion was the memorable one on which the octogenarian ex-President, John Q. Adams, quoted Genesis in support of his country's claim to the whole of Oregon. He was in the habit of styling Mr. Greenhow's work the "Gospel of our title," but, not contented with a gospel, he must have a Pentateuch for it too. His voice was feeble, and he was hemmed in by a crowd of members, eagerly listening to what he said. His quotation of Scripture elicited from those around him a mingled expression of amazement and regret. At that moment, and as it were in pity for the poor old man, a solitary bar of sunlight struggled into the chamber, and played for a second or two amongst the few grey hairs that still skirted the base

of his brain, as if to remind the lookers-on that, in the traces of advancing age without, there was sufficient apology for the strides of imbecility within.

The scenes with which members are sometimes favoured, arise quite as unexpectedly and incidentally as they do with ourselves. I have known the most insipid debates suddenly enlivened with them; whilst I have seen questions of the most stirring party interest disposed of without their occurrence. Indeed I generally found that, when the House had any very serious work before it, its decorum was marked and exemplary. Never was this more impressed upon me than when the last tariff bill passed through its later stages in the House. The question was one of intense interest. It was a party question, as well as an issue pending between monopoly and free trade. The House was so equally divided upon it, that it was impossible to foresee the ultimate fate of the bill. Excitement was at its height, and I repaired to the House in the full expectation of witnessing a scene. But although the battle was keenly contested by both parties, and although, on more than one occasion, fortune seemed to waver between them, everything passed off with the utmost quiet and decorum; the decisive vote in committee, of the day, being only carried by a majority of one. It is a mistake to think that great party questions cannot be decided without confusion and violence, or that the House cannot be thoroughly excited without coming to blows. Scenes have their origin there as here in the idiosyncracies of some and the ill-regulated passions of others, but they are promptly suppressed the moment they transcend the rules of parliamentary propriety.

The funniest feature in the proceedings of the

House is a division. There are three ways of taking the sense of the House in Washington. The Speaker may call for the Ayes and Noes, and decide at once, as with us. Any member dissatisfied with this may call for a division, whereupon the Speaker names two members, who take their stand on the middle of the floor, the pros and cons passing successively between and being counted by them. To the looker-on the confusion on the floor when the division is taking place seems inextricable, the whole House appearing to twirl round in two great eddies, in the midst of which it is no easy matter to keep one's eye on the tellers. How they manage to count everybody, and how they refrain from counting some six times over, were problems beyond my comprehension. It is not always that a division, when once commenced, is persevered in, the minority "giving it up" when it is evidently hopeless. To make things still surer, a member may demand the "yeas and nays," whereupon each member's name is called from the table in alphabetical order, and his vote duly recorded. A great deal of time is thus lost, especially when members, for the purposes of obstruction, choose to "avail themselves of the forms of the House." And whilst the yeas and nays are being taken in the House of Representatives, we may pass into the Senate.

Crossing the Rotunda, we get into a series of passages which lead to the ante-room of the Senate. But let us to the gallery above the Chair, as affording the best view of the House.

As already intimated, the Senate Chamber is, in form, similar to the Hall of Representatives, but much smaller in all its dimensions. It is much better lighted, more cheerful, and better adapted in all

respects than the other House for the purposes to which it is applied. Indeed, it is now being found as inconveniently small as the other Chamber is unnecessarily large; for, as the introduction of each new State into the Union adds two new members to the Senate, it will be difficult by-and-by to make room for the representatives of yet unborn States. Let us see who are present.

In the back row, to the President's right, that tall thin man, with pale face and restless eye, is Mr. Allen, of Ohio, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, a rabid "whole of Oregon" man, and one of the noisiest of the leaders of the war faction. As he speaks he makes his arms swing about as do those of a windmill, and sometimes causes the blood to spirt from his knuckles, from the force with which he brings them in contact with his desk. Next to him, and on his right, sits one of rather rotund proportions, with light hair and a face not unlike that given to Louis Philippe, by Horace Verney, in some of his late pictures. He is generally writing or reading, being apparently indifferent to all that is going on around him, but with a watchful eye on everybody and on everything all the while. If he sleeps it is with his eyes open. He seems never to attend, and yet he is never taken by surprise. Watch how, if anything interesting is said, he quietly shuts his book, keeping his finger at the page, listens until he is satisfied, and then resumes his reading; or how, when any personal squabble arises, he leans upon his elbow and enjoys it. This is Mr. Benton, of Missouri, the genius of the West, the foe to national banks, the champion of a metallic currency. He was at one time a very Sempronius, but is now more peaceably

disposed. He is still, and has ever been, one of the giants of the Senate. In the same line, and near the centre of the room, is the "war hawk," Mr. Hannegan, with squat figure, low brow, and square head and face. There he sits, chewing tobacco all day long, except when he is speaking, or doing the agreeable to the ladies in the ante-room. Mr. Hannegan is an honest man, of Irish extraction, and therefore harbouring a becoming hatred of England, entertaining the sincere conviction that she is a political ogress or ghoul, or something worse, if possible. He is one of the most energetic chiefs of the "now or sooner" party. Directly in front of him, with very red neck and face, sits General Cass, whilom minister in France, and now looking like a moral soda-water bottle, ready to burst or fly the cork. He cherishes enmity to England as one of the cardinal virtues, and can hardly think or speak of her without verging on apoplexy. A little to his left, and almost in front of Mr. Benton, sitting calm and erect and attentive to all that is going on, is the shrewd, clear, persuasive, nervous, and impressive Mr. Calhoun, the leader of the South, the advocate of free-trade, the friend of peace, and the champion of slavery. Beside him is his colleague Mr. M'Duffie, who first startled the ear of the Senate by threatening on its very floor the disseverance of the Union. But the fire of his eye is gone, his tongue has lost its eloquence, and he is now paralytic and effete. That physical phenomenon near him, looking like a man seen through a glass which only magnifies latitudinally, is Mr. Lewis, from Alabama. His arm-chair seems to be drawn out sideways, until it resembles a small couch, so as to give him admittance. He looks like a "prize man," like

three veritable Alderman Humphreys rolled into one. And yet this man has but one vote, having a colleague in one of the back rows, whom he could almost put into his pocket. Turning now to the Speaker's left, sitting close to the clerk's table, (for he is amongst the last of the new comers,) is "Sam. Houston," the conqueror of Texas,—for it is absurd to call him its liberator, as he can only be said to have delivered it in the sense of having delivered it into his own hands. He is very tall, very loose about the joints, and, on the whole, rather greasy looking, with a very high narrow head, and a small cunning-looking eye. He is dressed from head to foot in homespun grey (court-dress perchance in Texas), and passes most of his time lolling back in his chair, with one leg overhanging his desk, in which position he whittles away at wooden cigar-lights, which he has brought with him from the hotel, occasionally pointing them that he may pick his teeth. In default of these, he cuts up every pen within his reach. Even now you may see the debris of his day's labours lying in heaps at his feet. And yet this is the man who has added a territory to his country, out of which a whole constellation of States will yet arise. He would be truly lordly in his manner, and succeeds in being awkwardly polite. Beside him sits his colleague, the quondam Secretary of State to the now defunct republic of the "Lone Star." Immediately behind them you come upon a whole galaxy of Whigs, the first of whom to demand attention is Daniel Webster, one of the greatest statesmen, as he is certainly the most profound constitutional lawyer of the Union. Like Mr. Benton, he is generally busy with books or papers, neither of them speaking but on great occasions. Is that a

cheque-book that he is just signing? No; but a lady's album, which the little boy beside him, for a *douceur*, has smuggled into the Senate, with the intention of procuring for the owner of the said album the autographs of the "remarkable men" in the body. It is next handed to Mr. Crittenden from Kentucky, who signs it as if he were used to it, without asking any questions. Take him all in all, he is perhaps the most accomplished orator in the Senate, having a classic diction, with a vein of sarcasm, which sometimes gives great piquancy to his speeches. He was Attorney-general during the brief administration of General Harrison, and is set down amongst those who are "on the track," on the Whig side, for the Presidency. In front of him is Mr. Clayton, of Delaware, a man of strong practical mind, although not possessed to any great degree of the "gift of tongues." A little to his left is the "other Clayton," from the same State, a man who is supposed to have lost his articulation since taking the oath, on his admission to the body, as he has never since been heard to speak—a marvellous forbearance, all things considered. He chews and votes, and votes and chews. He appears to be thoroughly stained with tobacco, his complexion being that of a well-coloured meerschaum. Yet a most worthy man is the "other Clayton." In this part of the House there is an *hiatus*, which you would fain have filled up. You would like to see Henry Clay in his accustomed place;—the eloquent, the imperious, aye, even the tyrannical, the ugly, the gentlemanly Henry Clay. He gave up his seat in the Senate to gain the Presidency, and lost both. Like the man between two stools, he stumbled be-

tween the Capitol and the White House. He is now a scientific farmer in Kentucky, and dreams now and then of another race for the executive chair, which, if it ever take place, will certainly be his last, for he is verging on seventy; and since General Harrison's sudden death, parties have become chary of selecting "very old men" as their candidates. It is, now-a-days, the most contemptuous way of speaking of a candidate, to say that he is "too old for President."

The *coup-d'œil* of the Senate is striking. In all that enters into our conceptions of a deliberative assembly, it is as far before the House of Lords, as the House of Commons is before the House of Representatives. The mode in which business is occasionally transacted in the House of Lords is a perfect farce. Sometimes the most important questions are disposed of by less than half a dozen peers. I remember one occasion, on which the Duke of Buccleugh, in moving the second reading of some Scotch bill with which the Duke of Wellington had entrusted him, was about to enter into an elaborate statement of its nature and objects, so as to meet all objections to it at once, when he was stopped by Lord Lyndhurst, then Chancellor, who was standing by the woolsack impatient to get to dinner, and who asked him very drily, if he was addressing himself to noble lords opposite? pointing to the opposition benches. The noble duke at once saw the absurdity of his position, for there was not a single opposition peer present—himself, the Duke of Wellington, the Chancellor, and Lord Stanley, constituting the entire House. There are no such legislative burlettas in the Senate of the United States. Every member, unless detained by illness or urgent business, is daily

at his post. They are, generally speaking, an intellectual body of men—gentlemanly in their mutual intercourse, and courteous in their deportment towards each other. They will tolerate no sleight-of-hand tricks by which to secure a vote one way or the other; and I have frequently known a division postponed, at the instigation of one member, on account of the unavoidable absence of another. The Senate takes a just pride in its own good character, and the Americans are justly proud of the Senate. It is very careful too of its reputation, reproof being frequently administered to the few fiery spirits who have latterly got into it, by a reminder, when they are guilty of any indecorum, that they are not in the other wing of the Capitol.

The Senate is the truly conservative feature of the Constitution. It is the balance-wheel, by whose action the whole federal system is kept from resolving itself into its original atoms. It is to it that the country looks for salvation, when, for a season, the democracy may have run mad. It has more than once preserved the integrity of the Union, by its calm and resolute intervention between the country and destruction. On every occasion of this kind, it has called down upon itself a storm of obloquy, which has more than once threatened its extinction. Such was the case when it steadily placed itself between the other House of Congress and the precipice to which it was rushing, when, by an overwhelming majority, that House adopted the warlike Oregon resolutions. Calm and dignified, regardless of menace, and unmindful of every thing but its duty, it rejected them at its leisure, and so modified them, that their adoption, in their altered form, became as necessary

to the maintenance of peace, as, in their original shape, they would have been the certain prelude to war. It was adroitly as it was patriotically done. The resolutions, which originated with the war party, became at last the most potent weapons in the hands of the peace party. The latter thus took from the former its own weapons, and turned them against itself. After some difficulty, and with many contortions of countenance, the House was obliged to swallow the modified resolutions of the Senate. A bellicose House, and a warlike administration, were thus bearded and successfully defied by the conservative Chamber; and the United Kingdom and the United States, and indeed the whole world, remained at peace. As soon as it was suspected that the Senate would reject the resolutions of the House, the cry of "Look to the Senate!" was raised throughout the land, with a view, if possible, to create such a pressure from without as would compel it to accede to them. "Look to the Senate!" was written on every wall in Washington; and as you walked the streets the menace stared you, from the brick pavements, in the face. But instead of a threat, "Look to the Senate!" at last became a cry of hope,—the friends of peace taking it up as a cry ominous of good. It was well for all parties that they did not look to the Senate in vain. It was well for the United States—for the next greatest calamity to an unsuccessful war with England, that could befall them, would be a successful one.

To one in the habit of regarding the distribution of power between the different branches of the legislature in this country, the great influence of the Senate in the American system is a matter of some surprise. We are accustomed to look upon a resolute

House of Commons as an overmatch for its colleagues in legislation. It is not often that the House of Lords resists its voice; it never ultimately succeeds when it does so. But the Senate feels itself to be, in all respects, the coequal of the other House of Congress, and frequently beards it so as to defeat its all but unanimous purposes. The solution of this difference is to be found in the different constitution of the two bodies. The strength of the House of Commons is without; its foundations lie broad and deep in public opinion; it represents the people, and is irresistible. The Lords, on the other hand, represent but their own order, whose interests are always supposed to be in antagonism with those of the masses. It is enough that they resist the House of Commons in a favourite measure, to raise a cry and direct the whole force of public opinion against them. Occupying but a narrow basis, they cannot long resist, and the House of Commons is omnipotent.

Not so the House of Representatives. It has its match in the Senate, which springs from the same source, and has a footing as broad and as deep as itself. When the two Houses at Washington disagree, the people only see the two classes of their own representatives in conflict. A victory by the one or the other is a triumph neither for nor against the people; it is only the success of the one set of delegates against the other. The contest does not, as too often with us, assume the odious form of class against class, when the peers are coerced into acquiescence that the people may not be roused to frenzy by defeat. The Senate is as strong out of doors as its rival. It is otherwise with the House of Lords.

There is something poetically suggestive of the

territorial vastness of the Confederacy, in the mode in which the President of the Senate recognises its different members as they rise to address him. It is not "Mr. Calhoun," or "Mr. Benton," for instance; but "The Senator from South Carolina," or "The Senator from Missouri," as the case may be. During the hour set apart for ordinary routine business, when they succeed each other rapidly on the floor, the effect of this style of recognition upon the mind of the stranger is singular and impressive. Just now, it may be, a senator from the St. Lawrence, anon one from the banks of the Mississippi. You have senators from the Great Lakes, and senators from the Gulf; senators from the Atlantic, and senators from the spurs of the Rocky Mountains; senators from the sources, and senators from the mouths of the Mississippi; senators from the neighbourhood of the West Indies, and senators from the vicinity of Newfoundland. It is difficult for the mind thus to follow them about over the range of an entire continent. The very names of the different States give rise to curious reflections. In New York, Louisiana, Florida, and Texas, what have we but the accumulated spoils of England, France, Spain, and Mexico? Here they are now represented one and all under the same roof, united in the same bonds, and revolving in the same political system. How long thus to continue? is the question, considering the distances at which they lie, the interests which they possess, and the different skies under which they spread. Will their delegates still be sitting together as they do now, when the senators from Oregon and California are ready to come in?

The habitually calm and dignified attitude of the Senate presents a striking contrast to the fierce ex-

citements which occasionally carry the House of Representatives beyond the bounds of prudence and the limits of self-respect. Never was this contrast, in my experience, so complete, as on the first meeting of the two Houses after news had arrived in the capital of the actual commencement of hostilities on the Rio Grande. The intelligence reached Washington on Saturday night; and such was the impatience of many members of the Lower House to act upon it, that they would have abolished the intervening Sabbath for that occasion if they could. On Monday morning, there was a universal rush to the Capitol. A message from the President was communicated to both Houses, and before the close of that day's sitting, the House of Representatives, in the midst of an excitement which it was almost appalling to witness, passed, through all its stages, a bill for the appropriation of ten millions of dollars, and for raising a volunteer force of fifty thousand men to prosecute the war. They did not then foresee how small a proportion this sum would be to the ultimate cost of the adventure; nor would they listen to the prediction, since truly verified, that instead of volunteers, they would require many thousands of regulars to prosecute the war with effect. The Senate took the matter much more coolly. True, there were in it a few excitable gentlemen, such as Mr. Hannegan and Mr. Allen, who found themselves in a "scrimmage" at last, and Mr. Sevier of Arkansas, who seems more fitted to charge at the head of a dragoon regiment than to act as a legislator, and who was for making every man a brigadier-general on the spot, and trusting to Providence for recruits. But the majority were calm and collected, and smothered, if they did not

quench, the fires of their more excitable colleagues. On the message being read from the table, Mr. Calhoun immediately rose, and counselled the Senate to remember its own dignity—to be carried away by no mere impulses, but to act with the deliberation and calmness which generally characterized its proceedings. His words fell, in the main, upon willing ears; and the business of the day, stirring and important as it was, passed off with the utmost quietness and decorum.

To account for the difference thus existing between the two Chambers, for the quiet orderly bearing of the one, and the occasionally intemperate conduct of the other, is no difficult task. The Senate is, generally speaking, composed of men advanced in years, and of great political experience. Most of its members have been governors of, or held high posts in, their respective States; and most of them, by their translation to the federal Senate, have gained the summit of their ambition. They can, therefore, sit down calmly to the work of legislation, bringing the tempering counsels of age to bear upon the teachings of experience. A few of them may aspire to the Presidency, and may intrigue and manœuvre to obtain it; but the majority have realised all their political aspirations, and can therefore give their whole thoughts to their country's good. Very different, however, is it with the more fiery material on the other side of the Rotunda. In the House of Representatives a grey head is the rare exception. Composed chiefly of young blood, the great majority of its members bring inexperience and personal ambition to the work of legislation. They have no past on which to repose—the future is all before them.

They have merely commenced to mount the ladder, and the strife is who will mount it the quickest and the highest. Notoriety is what they want; and if a fiery speech or eccentric conduct will secure it, they deliver the one as readily as they pursue the other. Most of them too are but *débutants* on the only really respectable political arena of the country, and have not yet thoroughly divested themselves of the contracted views, contentious habits, and miscellaneous vices of the petty spheres in which they have hitherto revolved. By the time their minds become expanded, their deportment sedate, or their views really and disinterestedly patriotic, they are either transferred to the Senate, or altogether disappear from the political field. Thus differently constituted, it is no wonder that the two Chambers are frequently so differently conducted.

But we must now leave, as the Senate is about to resolve itself into executive session. It is nearly three in the afternoon, and we have scarcely gained Pennsylvania-avenue, when the "star-spangled banner," which waves over the Capitol during their sittings, is run down from its flagstaff, to announce that both Houses are up for the day.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Basement Story of the Capitol.—The Supreme Court and its Accommodations. — The Federal and Local Judiciary. — Great Defect in the Articles of Confederation.—A National Judiciary the creation of the Constitution.—Extent of the Judicial Powers of the Union.—Mode of exercising them.—The Supreme Court.—Inferior Courts.—Constitution and Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.—Perplexing Questions respecting its Jurisdiction.—Constitution and Jurisdiction of the Inferior Federal Courts.—Subordination, in certain cases, of the Legislative to the Judicial Power.—Explanation of this.—The Constitution the Supreme and Fundamental Law.—Power of the Supreme Court, in certain cases, to annul the Acts of a State Legislature.—Explanation of this.—The Judiciary System, as it relates to the several States.—The Common Law of England the basis of American Jurisprudence, with the exception of the State of Louisiana.—The Judiciary System of New York explained, as an Illustration of American Jurisprudence, as it relates to the several States.—The County Courts.—The Registry System.—The Bar of New York.—Conclusion.

WANDERING one day in the basement story of the Capitol, which resembles, in some respects, the crypt of one of our cathedrals, I got lost amongst the numerous and stunted pillars which support the dome of the edifice. On extricating myself from these, I strayed into some tolerably lighted passages, in one of which was a door, to which my attention was directed by familiar sounds which proceeded from within. I entered, and found myself in what appeared to be a large vault, newly whitewashed. It was full of people, the first whom I recognised being Mr. Webster, who was on his legs speaking in a very

dry and leisurely style, upon patents, and the law of patents. He did not seem to be addressing anybody in particular, but before him were seated four or five very shrewd-looking and very attentive gentlemen, all in a row, and habited in black gowns—a rather curious spectacle in the republican hemisphere. There were also many ladies and gentlemen present, evidently in the character of amateurs. I had scarcely recovered from the first surprise occasioned by my accidentally stumbling on such a scene, when the conviction flashed upon my mind that I was in the Supreme Court of the United States.

As the subject which engaged the attention of the Court was very crotchety, and the argument of the "constitutional lawyer" exceedingly dry, my mind soon took counsel of its free will, and wandered to topics more relevant to the place than to the case. I was astonished to find the first tribunal in the land so very wretchedly lodged. The chamber resembled a small section, but pretty well lighted, of the London Dock vaults, its space being broken by the short massive pillars, which supported its low half-arched looking roof. It is in fact neither more nor less than a sort of cellar to the Senate Chamber, the floor of which is partly supported by the pillars in question. It may be more convenient than becoming, thus to have the laws, which are made above, sent down stairs to be executed. And yet, as we shall see by-and-by, there are cases in which the gentlemen in the area are the constitutional superiors of the occupants of the first-floor.

I seated myself on one of the back benches, and, taking no interest in the immediate question, inasmuch as I was not a patentee, amused myself with jotting down some memoranda, by the help of which

I now proceed to lay before the reader a succinct account of the judiciary system of the Union. In doing so it is not my intention to confine myself to a consideration of the federal judiciary only, and the mode in which its functions are exercised, in contradistinction to the means whereby justice is administered in and by the different States of the Union—my design being to take a general survey of the distribution of judicial power between the States and the United States, and of the different systems by which justice is nationally and locally administered. Nor would this be the place, in which to enter into a minute analysis of the nature and limits of all the powers conferred upon, and exercised by, the different courts of the Union, or into an examination of all the instances in which their jurisdictions conflicted or were co-ordinate with each other. There are certain broad lines, connected with the outline of the subject, which arrest the attention of every one on the spot to observe for himself, and it is simply these which it is at present my object to trace.

The want of a national, in contradistinction to a local judiciary, was one of the greatest defects of the federative system which preceded the adoption of the present constitution. That document confers upon the United States, in addition to their legislative and executive powers, a judicial authority, which the articles of confederation did not extend to them. The authority, so granted, is strictly limited by the terms by which it is created; the Union, which is, in all its parts and manifestations, the mere creature of the Constitution, having no judicial power whatever beyond the range of the enumerated cases in which such power has been conceded to it. The principle that all powers not specifically granted are reserved

to the people of the different States, is as applicable to the judicial, as to the executive and legislative departments of the federal government. The clause of the Constitution creating the judicial power of the Union, confined it to the eleven following cases:— 1st, To cases, in law and equity, arising under the Constitution itself. 2nd, To similar cases arising under the laws of the United States. 3rd, To similar cases arising under treaties made, or which should thereafter be made, under the authority of the United States. 4th, To all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls. 5th, To all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction. 6th, To controversies in which the United States should be a party. 7th, To controversies between two or more States. 8th, To those between a State and the citizens of another State. 9th, To those between citizens of different States. 10th, To controversies between citizens of the same State, claiming lands under grants of different States; and 11th, To such as might arise between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign States, citizens or subjects. This limitation embraces a wide range, it is true; but, in the far more extended field which lies beyond, the administration of justice between man and man is confined to the constituted tribunals of the separate States. The United States courts can no more issue their process into Pennsylvania, in ordinary cases, between citizen and citizen, than the United States can construct a canal from Philadelphia to Pottsville, and tax the Pennsylvanians for its cost.

But the framers of the Constitution were not satisfied with specifying the limits to which the judicial power of the Union was to extend. They also prescribed the mode in which that power was to be

exercised, by designating the channels through which the administration of justice was to flow. The judicial power of the United States is declared by the Constitution to be vested "in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish." From this it appears that, in constructing the machinery whereby justice is, in its national sense, to be administered, Congress, with one exception, is entrusted with a species of unfettered discretion. The Constitution itself provides for the establishment of the Supreme Court. So far as that tribunal was concerned, Congress had no option, having the power neither to prevent its erection, nor to abolish it when constituted, nor to curtail or enlarge its jurisdiction. But the important matter of the creation of inferior courts was left entirely to its discretion; and the greatness and responsibility of the power thus conferred upon it will be better understood, when the jurisdiction of the supreme court and that of the inferior courts are considered.

The Supreme Court of the United States is a court of original and of appellate jurisdiction. Its original authority, however, extends to only two of the cases already enumerated, its jurisdiction in all the others being exclusively of an appellate character. The cases in which it has original jurisdiction are such as affect ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and such as a State may be a party to. With regard to the former, the Constitution remains in this respect unaltered; but with reference to the latter, a very important amendment was afterwards proposed and adopted. It would certainly appear that, when the citizens of another State, or of a foreign State, had claims to prosecute against any one State, the impar-

tial administration of justice would require that the party thus proceeded against should not be the party having the sole power to adjudicate in the matter. It was to provide against this, that the article of the Constitution creating the judicial power not only extended the authority of the federal courts to cases in which a State should be a party, either plaintiff or defendant; but also, by giving these courts original jurisdiction in such cases, impowered the States, or the parties proceeding against a State or States, to resort to them at once, without initiating their proceedings elsewhere. In cases in which a State was plaintiff, no objections were ever raised to the arrangement made by the Constitution; as it was obviously more proper that the plaintiff should, in such cases, resort to the national tribunals, than appeal to the courts of a sister State, of which the defendant or defendants might be members. But the most serious objections were very speedily raised to the liability of the States to be sued in certain cases before the federal courts. The number of the claims presented against them in these courts, and the decisions in which some of them resulted, particularly that in a case in which the State of Georgia was the defendant, when the Supreme Court solemnly decided that its jurisdiction equally extended to cases in which States were defendants as to those in which they were plaintiffs, so alarmed the different States for the consequences, that in 1798, only nine years after the adoption of the Constitution, an amendment to it was ratified to the effect, that "the judicial power of the United States" should not extend to cases "commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or

subjects of a foreign State." The result of this is that, in such cases, a State can no longer be made a party defendant to an action in any of the federal courts; although it is still liable to be made a defendant, or to be sued in these courts, when another State or a foreign State, instead of the citizens of another State or the subjects of a foreign State, is plaintiff. But as this amendment has reference only to one of the two instances in which the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is declared to be original, the question has since arisen whether the Supreme Court has been divested by it of any more than its original jurisdiction in the cases contemplated by the amendment. Thus, although the citizens of one State can no longer sue another State, or the citizens of a foreign State any of the United States, except in the tribunals of the State proceeded against, it does not necessarily follow that the Supreme Federal Court has not appellate jurisdiction in the matter, so as to enable either party, dissatisfied with the decision of the State Court, to apply for its reversal in the national tribunal. If the Supreme Court has not been divested of this appellate jurisdiction by the amendment, in the cases specified, it follows that, in these cases, a State may still be summoned before it, when it is called upon to defend a writ of error. It has been decided that the appellate jurisdiction of the court has not been taken away; and the whole question affords an excellent illustration of what was said in a former chapter of the intricacy of the American system, as seen in the lines of distinction, sometimes so nice as to be almost impalpable, which intervene between federal and local authority.

Explicit as the terms of the Constitution would

appear to be in all that relates to the organization and authority of the national tribunals, the point just alluded to is not the only one which has given rise to perplexing questions between American jurists. Much argument has been lavished, for instance, upon the question, whether the affirmation of certain powers, in specified cases, in the Supreme Court, does not preclude it from exercising in these cases those other powers which are exclusively conferred upon it in other cases. It is perfectly obvious that the Supreme Court has no original jurisdiction, except in the two cases in which such jurisdiction has been granted it; nor is it in the power of Congress, by any act, to enlarge or curtail that jurisdiction. In all but these its jurisdiction is exclusively appellate. Thus, for instance, in all admiralty and maritime cases, and in such as arise under the Constitution, the laws, or the treaties of the United States, the Supreme Court has appellate but no original authority, unless the character of the parties vest it with such. So far all is plain enough. But the question is, Has appellate jurisdiction been denied it in cases in which original jurisdiction has been conferred upon it? Thus, in a controversy in which a State may be plaintiff, its powers are original; but does an appeal lie, in such case, from an inferior national tribunal to the Supreme Court of the United States? The current of authority seems to be in favour of the affirmative of the question; but there still exists some diversity of opinion upon it. If the negative were to prevail, it is very obvious that one clause of the Constitution would directly countervail another. For instance, the Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction in all cases arising under the laws, treaties, and constitu-

tion of the Union. But it has original jurisdiction in a case where a State may be plaintiff, or where two States may be the litigant parties. If the case pending between two States in one of the inferior tribunals, say a Circuit Court, should be one arising under the laws, constitution, or treaties of the Union—to deny the power of appeal in such case to the Supreme Court, because it had original jurisdiction of the matter, would be to decide that the Supreme Court had not appellate jurisdiction in all such cases; whereas, in all such cases, that jurisdiction has been expressly conferred upon it. The true interpretation of the Constitution appears to be, that although in cases in which original jurisdiction has been granted to the Supreme Court, parties may resort in the first instance to that court, they are not compelled to do so; nor is the court divested of its appellate jurisdiction, should they initiate proceedings in an inferior tribunal competent to entertain them. From this it will be obvious that there are two principles which regulate the jurisdiction of the court—the nature of the case, and the nature of the parties. Thus, whatever may be the nature of the case, although it should arise, for instance, under the laws or treaties of the Union, whenever a State is a party, with the exception provided for in the amendment alluded to, the court is clothed with original jurisdiction, of which the parties may avail themselves if they please. And again, whatever may be the nature of the parties, if they do not avail themselves of the original jurisdiction of the court when it is in their power to do so, and the case is one in which the court is invested with appellate power, there seems to be but little reason why the nature of the parties should, in

such case, operate to divest it of that appellate power.

This question is closely identified with another, which has likewise given rise to considerable discussion. Some have contended for the exclusive character of the original jurisdiction conferred upon the Supreme Court; whilst others have insisted that the inferior courts may be invested with concurrent jurisdiction in all cases in which that of the Supreme Court is made original. On this point there seems, as yet, to have been no authoritative ruling, although the weight of opinion is in favour of the view, that it is quite competent for Congress to vest, in such cases, a concurrent jurisdiction in the inferior courts. There are some cases also in which the appellate power of the Supreme Court of the United States extends to the revision of the judgments of the State courts. But more of this when the State courts are adverted to.

Congress, in execution of the powers conferred upon it in reference to inferior tribunals, proceeded immediately to the erection of such tribunals all over the country. And here let me observe, that these tribunals must not be confounded with the State courts, with which they are co-existent. In some respects they may be regarded as a mere amplification of the Supreme Court, for the more prompt and efficient administration of justice; whilst in others, such as the nature of their powers, they very materially differ from it. But they are essentially federal in all their ramifications, having, like the Supreme court, cognizance only of such matters as involve considerations in which all the States are equally interested. The whole country is first divided into

circuits, each having its circuit court; and each circuit then subdivided into districts, each of which has its district court. Each circuit may comprise a State, or several States; each district, a State or a fraction of a State. The judges of the Supreme Court are the circuit judges, each judge having his own fixed circuit. The judges of the district courts are local and subordinate functionaries, each resident within his own district. The federal government has also throughout the country its own justices of the peace, and in every district a district attorney, subordinate to the federal Attorney-general, and whose duty it is to watch over its interests, and to prosecute or defend in its name, and a ministerial officer to execute its process, known as the marshal of the district. The federal courts compose a system, the parts of which are in regular subordination—an appeal lying from the district courts to the circuit court of the circuit in which they lie, and from the circuit courts to the Supreme Court of the United States.

The inferior courts can of course exercise no jurisdiction, even with the sanction of Congress, beyond the circle of the judicial powers vested by the Constitution in the United States. But although that document has specified the character of the jurisdiction which the Supreme Court is to assume in the different cases within that circle, it has left that of the powers and authority of the inferior courts, as well as their creation and organization, to the discretion of Congress. The United States are invested with a certain amount of judicial authority. With the exception of creating the Supreme Court, and declaring in what cases its jurisdiction is to be original, and in what only appellate, the Constitution

leaves to the United States the power to devise the mode in which the whole of their judicial authority shall be exercised, and the machinery by which it is to be kept in operation. Thus it is equally silent upon the powers of the inferior courts, with the exception of the limitation placed upon the judicial powers of the Union, as it is upon their precise number and character. The distribution of the powers of the Supreme Court by the Constitution, was no rule for Congress in the distribution of jurisdiction amongst the inferior tribunals. It was, for instance, not prevented from conferring upon the inferior courts original, when the Supreme Court had only appellate, jurisdiction. Nor was it prevented, although some have contended otherwise, from conferring concurrent jurisdiction on the inferior courts in cases in which original jurisdiction had been vested in the Supreme Court; or from giving them, each in their order, appellate jurisdiction over courts immediately inferior to them, in all cases in which the Supreme Court was entrusted with a similar jurisdiction. With the exception of the distribution made by the Constitution, Congress was left at liberty to distribute the judicial powers as it pleased. Original jurisdiction in one tribunal or another, or in several sharing it in allotted proportions, should be coextensive with the judicial power. As the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was limited to a mere fraction of the judicial power, unless Congress had been authorized to vest original jurisdiction in the tribunals of its own creation, to the full extent of its judicial authority, that authority, except so far as the Supreme Court had original jurisdiction, would be a mere nullity. The circuit and district

courts of the United States were, therefore, constituted courts of original jurisdiction, to the full extent of the judicial power of the United States; unless the opinion of some, that they cannot lawfully exercise such jurisdiction in cases in which that of the Supreme Court is original as well as appellate, be the correct one. The district courts are courts of admiralty, both in civil and criminal cases, and both as instance and as prize courts.

In every well-regulated government the judicial is necessarily co-extensive with the legislative power. Unless a government has the power of administering its laws to the extent to which it can make them, its legislative functions are a mockery, so far as they are not sustained by judicial authority. If the American system furnishes us with any exception to this indispensable condition to a well-balanced government, it is not by the judicial power falling short of the legislative, but by its apparently transcending it. Not only in the federal system, but in that of the different States, is the legislature in some cases in seemng subordination to the supreme judicial tribunal. But it is only seeming. Within the pale of their respective powers, the general and State governments are uncontrolled, and the courts are compellable to administer their enactments. But beyond the pale of their powers they are checked in the exercise of legislative authority by the terms and by the spirit of the several Constitutions. It is as the interpreter and guardian of the Constitution, therefore, that the Supreme Court of the United States may be called upon to annul an act of Congress. The Constitution is the supreme and fundamental law, which all, the legislature included, are bound to obey; and it is when any act of the legislature in the opinion of the

Supreme Court violates this, the fundamental law of the land, that that Court sustains the fundamental law, in opposition to the unconstitutional act, and thereby renders the latter a nullity. In all this it will be seen that the judicial power confines itself strictly to its own proper functions, without arrogating to itself any legislative prerogatives. It is bound to sustain the Constitution against all innovators; and when a statute is at variance with the Constitution, the statute must fall, for the Court has no alternative but to give effect to the Constitution. In controlling the legislative power, therefore, it is only vindicating the supreme law. In the same way the Court is bound to sustain, against all invaders, the treaties of the Union.

No matter how unconstitutional an act of Congress may be, the Court cannot of itself initiate proceedings to lay it aside. It must wait until a case is brought before it involving the legality of the act, ere it can arrest its operation. A law may be notoriously unconstitutional, but the Supreme Court has nothing to do with it until the question involved in it is judicially raised. When that is done, the Supreme Court has power to declare it repugnant to the Constitution, and to refuse to give it effect; whereupon it becomes a dead letter, there being no appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court on any constitutional or other question.

There are cases, too, in which this transcendant power extends to the acts of the different State legislatures. This branch of the judicial authority arises from the very necessity of the case; for in a political system like that of the United States, the terms and spirit of the Federal Constitution are as liable to

be violated by a State as by the federal legislature. In all such cases, the integrity of the Constitution could obviously be only safely entrusted to the guardianship of the Supreme Federal Court. Thus, the Constitution prohibits any State from passing a law impairing the obligation of contracts. Should any State pass a law violating this clause, on its being brought before the Supreme Court of the United States, in the regular course of judicial proceedings, the law would be set aside as repugnant to the Constitution. Perhaps the most notable case in which this power has been exercised as regards a State, was one in which a law of the State of New Hampshire was annulled as violating the clause in question. But the Supreme Court of the United States can only exercise this power when the State law infringes the Constitution of the United States. We shall presently see to whom the power of annulling its acts is entrusted, when a State legislature infringes the State Constitution.

Such is a general view of the powers and organization of the federal judiciary. Let us now glance briefly at the judicial system as it relates to the several States.

With the exception of the State of Louisiana, the common law of England is the basis of the jurisprudence of all the States of the Union. The common law is coeval in America with our colonial dominion. Long before the Revolution, it had of course undergone many statutory modifications, to render it more conformable in some points to the circumstances and wants of the colonies. The Revolution produced but little change in the jurisprudence of the continent, the system remaining in all essential parts the same

– the alterations which ensued being chiefly confined to the machinery by which justice was administered. The common law, therefore, remains to this day, with the exception alluded to, at the foundation of the American juridical system. The alterations which have been effected in it since the period of independence, are perhaps not greater than the changes which have been engrafted upon it at home during the last seventy years. The civil law is the basis of the jurisprudence of Louisiana, which, until 1803, when it was purchased by the United States, was a colony of France. In the States in which the common law prevails, the decisions of English courts of justice, down to the separation of the colonies from the mother country, are authorities in the American courts. Since that period the decisions of the different State courts are the only authorities cited in their respective States. English decisions down to the present day, although they have no absolute authority, still carry great weight with them. It would only require the addition of their own reports, and of a few American text-books, to make the library of an English lawyer complete for all the purposes of an American practitioner.

Like their political systems, the principle which is at the basis of the jurisprudence of the different States is the same; it is the machinery for its administration that is diversified. To enter into any details concerning the judiciary of each State would be as uncalled for as it would be tedious. My object is to show the bearing of the State and Federal systems upon each other, which will be sufficiently answered by a rapid sketch of the provisions made for the administration of justice in any one State—say New York.

In the State of New York, the judicial power is as ample as the State Constitution, and the State legisture acting within the limits of the Constitution, have made or may make it, with a reservation in favour of the powers exclusively conceded to the Federal tribunals. It is co-extensive with the legislative authority of the State, and with the common law, except so far as it has been modified by State legislation.

In civil questions, arising between citizen and citizen, or in matters which involve the criminal law of the State, the State courts alone have jurisdiction; the federal courts having no greater share of concurrent or appellate jurisdiction in these cases, than have those of a foreign country. Each State, in the exercise of its sovereignty, administers justice for itself, except in cases affecting the United States, the cognizance of which has been expressly conceded to the courts of the Union. In addition to other instances, in which an appeal lies from the decision of the highest State tribunal to the Federal courts, these courts are permitted to exercise the same supervisory control in cases pending before a State court, in which any of the laws of the Union are incidentally brought in question, and the decision of the court is against the law or laws so involved. But in all other cases the two jurisdictions are, in their respective spheres, as separate from and independent of each other, as the political system of the State is independent in its own sphere of that of the United States. Thus, when M'Leod was arrested, it was by the authorities of the State of New York that he was brought to trial before the supreme court of the State at Utica; the courts of the United States having nothing to do with the case, his imputed

crime, murder, being a violation of the law of the State, not of the United States. But, on the other hand, when M'Kenzie, the Canadian rebel, was tried for levying war within the territory of the United States against a power with which they were at amity, his trial took place before the district court of the United States, sitting at Canandaigua, in the State of New York; his crime being a violation of the laws, not of the State, but of the United States. These instances serve to show the basis on which the two jurisdictions rest, and to designate the line which separates them.

The State of New York had, until very lately, when, on the revision of the Constitution, the Court of Chancery was abolished, two sets of tribunals, one having an equitable, and the other a common-law jurisdiction. In Pennsylvania the two jurisdictions have long been blended in one set of courts, the common-law tribunals having an equity side. New York, in following her example, has got rid of a court which has long been an ornament to her jurisprudence, and over which some of the ablest of her jurists have presided. As the change has as yet been but a year or so in operation, it is impossible to say definitely with what result it has been attended. The Court of Chancery, whilst it existed, was presided over by a Chancellor, assisted by eight Vice-chancellors, there being one in each of the eight judicial subdivisions of the State.

The highest common-law court having original as well as appellate jurisdiction, is the Supreme Court of the State. In many points its position and powers are analogous to those of the Court of Queen's Bench in this country; in others, the two tribunals are very dissimilar. At one time its sittings were

chiefly held in Albany, the capital of the State; but it is now peripatetic—its four terms, viz. January, May, July, and October terms, being held respectively in Albany, in New York, in Utica in the centre, and in Rochester in the western portion of the State. It sits to adjudicate upon appeals and matters of law, but a trial at bar may be had before it, on proper cause shown, as in this country.

Like the analogous court in the federal system, the Supreme court of the State is the guardian and interpreter of the Constitution of the State, as it has the power of virtually annulling, by defending the Constitution from invasion, any act of the legislature which it may regard as unconstitutional. This feature of the judicial system runs through the whole polity of America, both state and federal. It was necessary to interpose some power between the legislature and the Constitution; for had the legislature been the sole interpreter of the Constitution, it is evident that the latter would have been only what the former chose at any time to make it. But here the analogy between the Supreme Court of the United States and the Supreme court of the State ends. The original jurisdiction of the latter is almost co-extensive with the judicial power, whilst it is unlike the former in this also, that it is only in constitutional questions that it is a court of final appeal; in all other cases its decisions may be carried by writ of error to the Court of Errors, or rather, as it is officially styled, the Court for the Correction of Errors, composed of the Senate of the State.* The Senate is strictly a court of appeal, with the single exception of cases of impeachment, of which it has exclusive jurisdiction.

* A distinct Court of Appeal has since been created.

For the trial of issues of fact, Circuit courts have been established throughout the State, which is divided for this purpose into eight circuits, corresponding with its eight senatorial districts. To each circuit is appointed a local judge called the circuit judge, who holds his court for the trial of all issues of fact, and of criminals, although their alleged crimes may be of the highest penal description, twice a year, in each county comprised within his district. The circuit judge, before the abolition of the Court of Chancery, was also the vice-chancellor of his circuit; but in some of the circuits, such as the eighth, or that comprising the western portion of the State, the amount of business, both of an equity and common-law cast, at length became so large as to require a division of the duties, and the appointment of a separate vice-chancellor. All cases pending in the Circuit courts, are supposed to originate, as with us at Nisi Prius—in bank, that is to say, in the Supreme court, by whose authority, appearing on the record, they are sent down for trial, and to which they are returned after verdict for judgment. All points of law arising during the trial from the decision of the circuit judge on which either of the parties may choose to appeal, are transferred to the Supreme court for argument and adjudication. So a demurrer may, as with us, take the case entirely out of the Circuit court, and transfer its decision to the Court in bank. In short, the relation between the two courts is in almost all points the same as that subsisting between the courts at Westminster and those of Nisi Prius in this country.

Subordinate to the Circuit courts in power and position, though without any very direct relationship

between them, are the County courts. These courts, of which there is one in each county, whilst they have appellate jurisdiction over tribunals inferior to themselves, have also, to a certain extent, both in civil and criminal cases, a concurrent original jurisdiction with the Supreme court; for the Circuit courts may be regarded as mere amplifications of the Supreme court for the trial of issues of fact. The County court has cognizance only of such matters as, being otherwise within its jurisdiction, arise within the limits of the county. It formerly consisted of five judges, one of whom was styled First Judge, whose duration of office was five years, and whose appointment lay with the Governor and Senate of the State. As it was not necessary to be a lawyer to be a county judge, the decisions of the County courts were frequently very wide of the legal mark; nor did they attach to themselves that respect and confidence which, under a different regulation, they might have inspired. I have known instances in which all the five judges were farmers—not a single professional man being on the bench. The consequence was, that most suitors, when their cases were important, preferred resorting to the Supreme court; when, had the County bench been properly constituted, justice might have been administered to them much more cheaply and more speedily than by the superior tribunal. I have frequently heard bitter complaints made of this radical defect in a court which had cognizance, concurrently with the Supreme court, of civil cases, involving property to a large amount; and of all criminal cases, which were not capital in their nature, or punishable with imprisonment for life in either of the State's prisons of Auburn or Sing

Sing. Appeals lie to the County court from the decisions of the different justices of the peace throughout the county, and from those of the civic tribunals, which may be erected for the local administration of justice, in such towns as may lie within its jurisdiction.

The State, like the United States, has not only a chief law officer in its Attorney-general, but it has also in each county its district attorney, whose duty it is to institute an inquiry into all offences committed within the county, and to follow up such inquiry with a prosecution of the offenders, when necessary. Sometimes this duty, both as regards the State and the United States, is vested in one and the same person. There are also coroners appointed for each county, with duties analogous to those of the coroner in this country, both as to investigating into the causes of fatal accidents, and the service of process when the sheriff is party to a suit. Each county has also its sheriff, who nominates his subordinate functionaries, but who is himself elected to his post every two years, if I mistake not, by the people of the county. The county clerk is also an elective officer, who has charge of the county office, which, although having but little to do with the judicial system of the State, is nevertheless so important a feature in its general polity, that I cannot here avoid alluding to it. The county office is not only the place where copies of all process in cases pending in the County court are filed, but it is also part and parcel of the general registry system, which prevails throughout the State. In New York, all transactions concerning land, to be valid and binding upon future parties claiming an interest, must be registered

in the county office of the county in which this land is situated. The result of this general system of registration is, that no more obscurity hangs over transactions in real, than in personal property—the books being open for the inspection of all, on the payment of a small fee—so that the state of any landed property can be at once ascertained, as regards the true ownership of, and the liens and encumbrances which may be upon, it. In a country where land is a commodity as marketable as any personalty, claims to it, but for this system, would become inextricably entangled, whilst the ease and advantage with which it works recommend it to more general adoption amongst ourselves. The whole system of conveyancing too is exceedingly simple, fee simples and leaseholds being almost the only species of tenures existing in the State.

The bar of New York is, in the main, exceedingly respectable. Proof of competency, by examination, after a probation of seven years in an attorney's office, is necessary to admittance as an attorney of the Supreme court. A certain scholastic career, previously to its commencement, may curtail this long probationary term to three years. After practising for two years in the inferior capacity, the attorney, on satisfactorily passing another examination, is admitted to the degree of counsellor, equivalent to that of barrister with us. All branches of the profession are united in America in one and the same person —the counsellor being his own attorney and special pleader, an arrangement which obtains in our own provinces as well as in the United States. The practitioner of one State cannot practise in another, without regular admittance to the courts of that other

State. The terms upon which admittance is given in these cases vary in the different States. To become a member of the bar in Massachussetts, no regular course of study whatever is required; from which, however, it does not follow that no knowledge of the law is requisite—admission being only had on passing a pretty rigorous examination. It is no matter where or how the necessary knowledge is acquired, if it is possessed. The simple proof of qualification is all that is demanded, no questions being asked as to the antecedents of the applicant. Nor can the practitioner of any State, even though he should have been admitted to practise in every State, plead in the Supreme court of the United States, without express admission to its bar.

Such is a very cursory sketch of the machinery adopted for the administration of justice in the State of New York. I have not selected that State because I think that its judicial system is better than that of any other, or because I wished very particularly to acquaint the reader with its precise scope and character, but because some such selection was necessary in order to illustrate the distinct and independent systems which enter into the juridical polity of the Republic. It will be seen that the line of demarcation separating the two great departments of the judiciary system is coincident, or nearly so, with that which intervenes between the two grand primary subdivisions of the civil polity of the nation—the United States both legislating and administering justice in matters affecting the entire confederation, whilst each State reserves to itself all the judicial and legislative attributes of sovereignty in matters purely affecting its own welfare and internal management. In cases